

# IN THESE TIMES

What's next for  
U.S.-Soviet  
relations? p.3

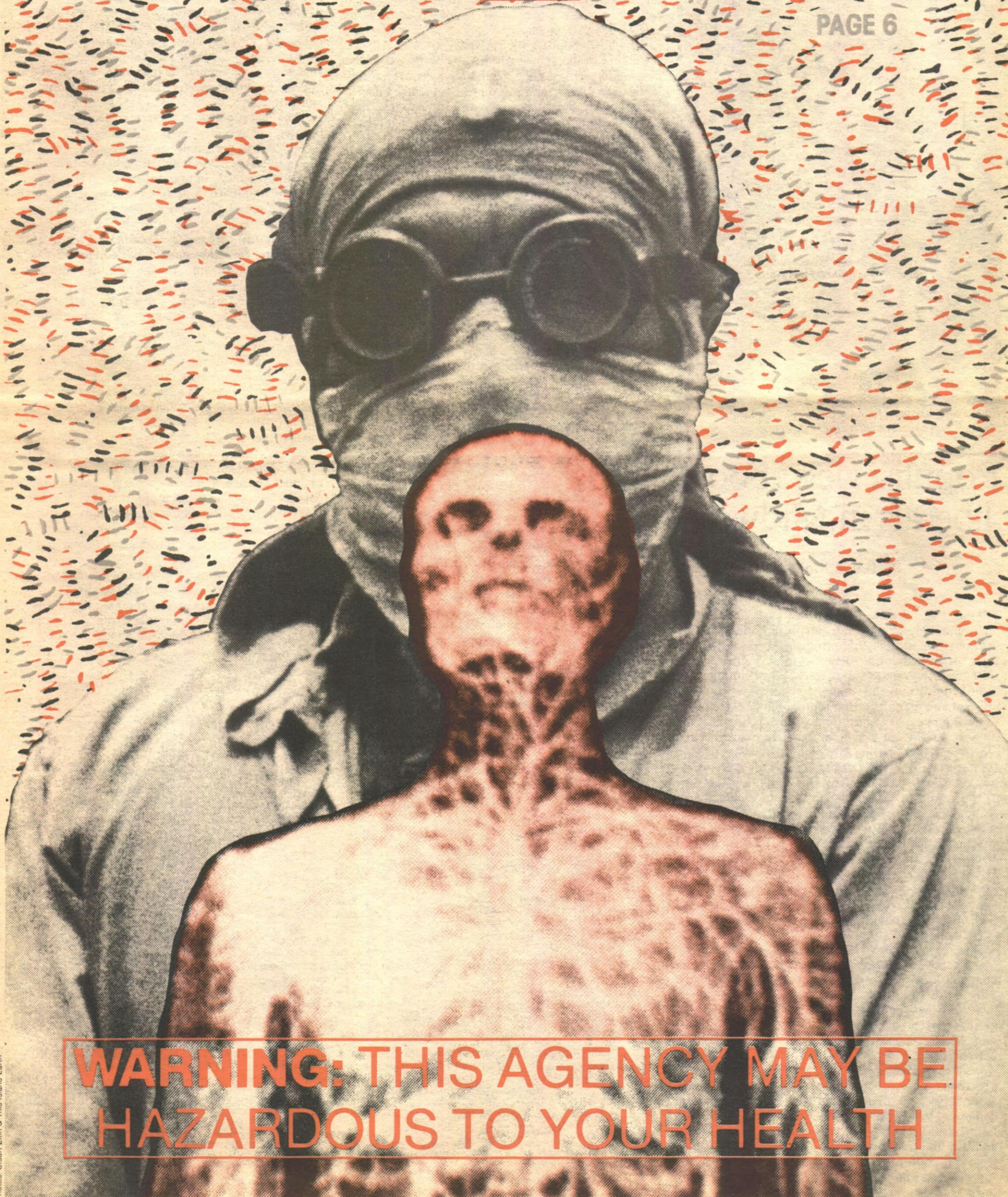
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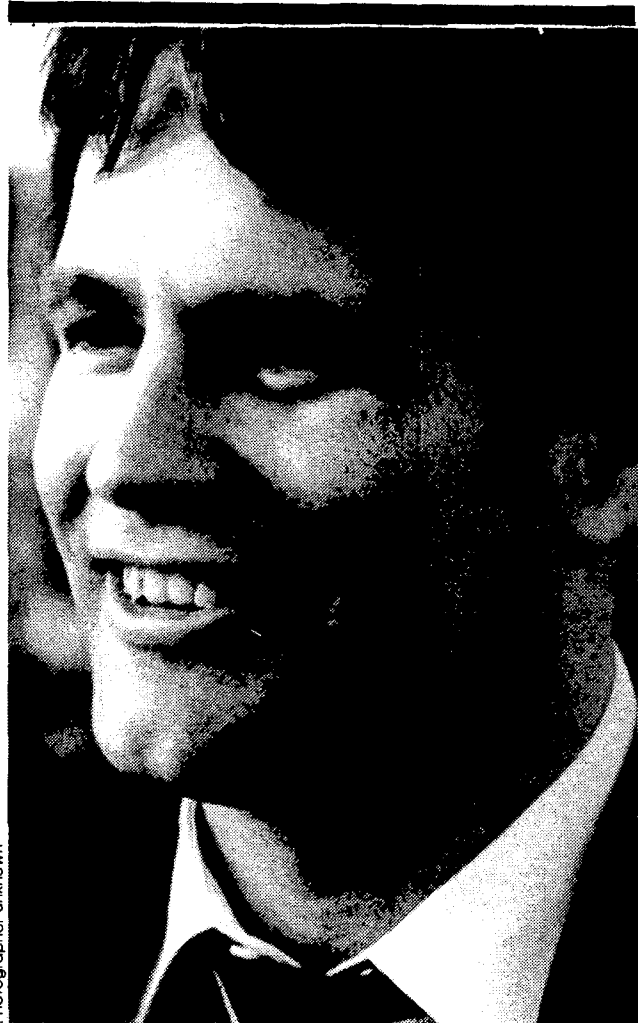
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# THE INSIDE STORY



Photographer unknown

Rep. Lane Evans (D-Ill.) appeals to "conservative" ideals by advocating liberal-left policies.

## Populist views boost liberals in Midwest

By David Moberg

GALESBURG, ILL.

Amid the old cars, horse-drawn carts and myriad high school marching bands, just behind the Clothing Workers' union float that pleaded "Help the jobless, fight for your union," there was the Congressman in shirtsleeves waving to the subdued crowd of a couple thousand watching the annual Labor Day parade. As a railroad and manufacturing center of 35,000 people in western Illinois, Galesburg—once much too radical for its neighbors as an abolitionist underground railroad center—has had a strong core of unionism since the late 19th century. But the rural and small-town conservatism of the area has long made this Republican territory.

The town's manufacturing and the surrounding farm economy have taken a beating in recent years, with unemployment in the district (which also includes the farm implement manufacturing centers of Rock Island and Moline) still around 16 percent. Last fall Lane Evans, a 31-year-old legal aid attorney, took his "populist" message to the voters and defeated an ultraconservative Republican to become the second Democrat since the Civil War to represent the area. (See *In These Times*, Oct. 20 and Nov. 10.)

Since then, Evans has been hard at work winning friends and servicing the needs of the district, out of both political necessity and principle. He has also joined with 14 other primarily Midwestern Congress members to form a new populist caucus. "We don't think the average person has representation in Congress," Evans said. "We feel most people are underrepresented in both parties."

With such advocacy for "the little guy," Evans manages to blend appeals to some bedrock, supposedly conservative ideals with a generally left-liberal program in defense of labor, women, minorities—along with small business owners and farmers—and against militarism and U.S. intervention overseas. The result is not a politics for every corner of the country, but it does capture for the left the nobler sentiments of the rural and small-town Midwest—and wins Evans support.

Chuck Hudnall, a plant manager in a manufacturing firm, was gathered with a Labor Day parade crew of men in similar red T-shirts with yellow lettering indicating they were members of "Fire Base Galesburg" of the Vietnam Veterans of Illinois. Hudnall, state president of VVI and normally a Republican, was enthusiastic about Evans: "He's a wonderful man. He's a straight shooter. He's doing a good job representing a cross section of people." Later, at the Labor Day rally, Jerry Miller, the moderate Republican mayor of Galesburg, also praised Evans as "very aggressive, very ambitious and really making a sincere effort to represent feelings of the local constituents. People from both parties are impressed. They feel he's established a strong base."

Evans got little support from farmers or business when he ran, but since the election he has visited Farm Bureau meetings throughout the district (as well as keeping in touch with the smaller, more populist farm groups that did back him). He also sponsored in Galesburg a one-day meeting for local businesses on how to get more contracts from the federal government.

### Taking on Reagan.

But despite these overtures beyond his base of support, Evans doesn't pull punches politically. In a short talk at the Labor Day rally, he lambasted Reagan's lack of concern for the unemployed or employed workers, small business and farmers, backed price controls on natural gas, endorsed the revived ERA and criticized the administration for easily finding money to finance new military projects like the B-1 bomber, but not finding it to pay for health insurance for the unemployed. He also pledged his aid in keeping a state mental health center in Galesburg—keeping with his view that the representative should use his "bully pulpit" for advocacy.

Evans spends as much time as possible back in the district, making the rounds as he did over the Labor Day recess (many more parades, picnics, hog roasts and rallies, a stint at the local muscular dystrophy telethon, a day working on a local farmer's acreage). Every Wednesday evening in Washington he also takes toll-free calls from constituents. Back in the district, Evans' active staff operates out of four offices, two of them full-time, plus a mobile office that has visited more than 100 small communities. Several former union staff people treat constituent complaints as a good shop steward would handle grievances.

Evans may have little legislative clout in Washington (although he is proud that he was the first freshman to get a bill through this session). But he can service individual complaints. Now he is starting a series of forums that will establish needs for the various parts of his district.

Evans' populism often takes some surprising turns. He was inundated by postcards and letters opposing withholding tax on bank interest payments and joined many conservatives in voting to repeal it. His justification? It would be a special hardship on small banks, whereas big banks would be able to capitalize on the "float" that resulted from such withholding.

When the proposed expanded \$8.4 billion funding of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) came up, big banks as well as labor unions that had backed Evans urged his support for the bill, which passed both houses but is still considered vulnerable. But he voted against the funding. He argued that the money should be used to help depressed communities in the U.S. Evans believes that the IMF often imposes undesirable austerity

requirements on recipient countries and that much foreign aid generally props up undemocratic regimes and thus obstructs the reform really needed. Finally, sharing a criticism of both left and right, Evans sees the bill as more a bail-out for bankers who made bad loans than a boon to workers here or overseas—who could end up fighting each other in a hot war in Central America or elsewhere.

As a Vietnam-era veteran, Evans combines an appeal for better treatment of vets (such as his bill to extend the life of veteran centers) with a Vietnam-era skepticism about overseas adventurism. His attention to veterans gives greater credibility to his foreign policy and military critiques: he voted against the MX and nerve gas funding, and he was one of three Democratic representatives to call for suspension of aid to Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos after the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino. Typically, western Illinois has had an isolationist bent and deep doubts about foreign aid. Although Evans' critiques come from the left rather than the traditional right, they often fall on receptive ears.

### Controlling the Fed.

Like the rest of his populist caucus, Evans is most concerned about economic issues—government creation of jobs, fighting concentration of the banking and finance industry, reforming the Federal Reserve Bank (which he thinks should have an expanded board with workers, small business and farmers represented and that should set annual interest rate targets) and low-interest credit allocation for needy small businesses and farmers.

"The real problem is the lack of social fabric in the country due to centralization," Evans says. "You'll see populists fight for small banks and savings and loans. We're all card-carrying capitalists, but we're against the big corporations." In one small town in the district, he reports with satisfaction, the local Republican banker is a leader in the fight against utility rate hikes.

Evans relies heavily on others in the populist caucus—such as Iowa Rep. Tom Harkin and North Dakota Rep. Byron Dorgan—and on the "common sense" advice of his constituents. But he has little time to read, beyond keeping up with the *New York Times*, local newspapers and materials fed him by staff and lobbyists, which include very few groups or individuals on the left.

The revival of the "populist" label for politicians does not signify the revival of "populism," which was a broad social movement marked by spontaneity and mass participation. In general, Evans-style populism may be the current best hope in much of the vast central region of the country, with its mix of defense of small-town virtues and a hostility to imperial corporations or governments that reflects the remaining "social fabric" of towns like Galesburg. But it inflates the importance of small business as a savior from the nation's ills. The country as a whole needs a program that goes farther, making a place for public ownership and enterprise and in some cases nationalization of various industries as a prelude to decentralization with greater community and worker control.

Yet Evans has found a political style and language—buttressed by easy access and ready service—that shows how left politics can succeed and gain popularity even in areas long imagined as hostile territory. The old populism of the heartland may still have some life. ■

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By John B. Judis

## WASHINGTON

IF THE SOVIET SHOOTING DOWN OF a South Korean commercial airliner had occurred in the first chapter of a John Le Carre spy novel, then one would have had good reason to expect that much more was involved than met the eye and that the repercussions of the incident would extend far beyond the usual diplomatic brouhaha. What makes the real-life shooting down of the plane peculiar is that not much more than meets the eye seems to have been involved, yet the incident's repercussions will extend far beyond diplomatic shouting matches.

During the summer, there were clear signs of a thaw in U.S.-Soviet relations. The superpowers reached a compromise agreement at the long-stalled Madrid talks, they signed a generous five-year grain agreement guaranteeing Soviet purchases of at least nine million metric tons a year (compared to current purchases of six million tons), the U.S. withdrew its objections to the sale of pipelayers to the Soviet Union for use in the Soviet-West European natural gas pipeline and the U.S. and Soviet Union began talks in late August on renewed cultural and scientific exchanges and the opening of consulates in Kiev and New York City. These measures nullified the steps that the Carter administration had taken after the December 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

But according to experts in U.S.-Soviet relations, the Soviet shooting down September 1 of a South Korean commercial airliner, with 269 aboard, has dashed hopes for further improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations and has raised fears of a substantial increase in tension between the two countries.

They believe that the most immediate casualty of the incident is the intermed-

## Prior to the jet incident, some think missile deployment may have been halted.

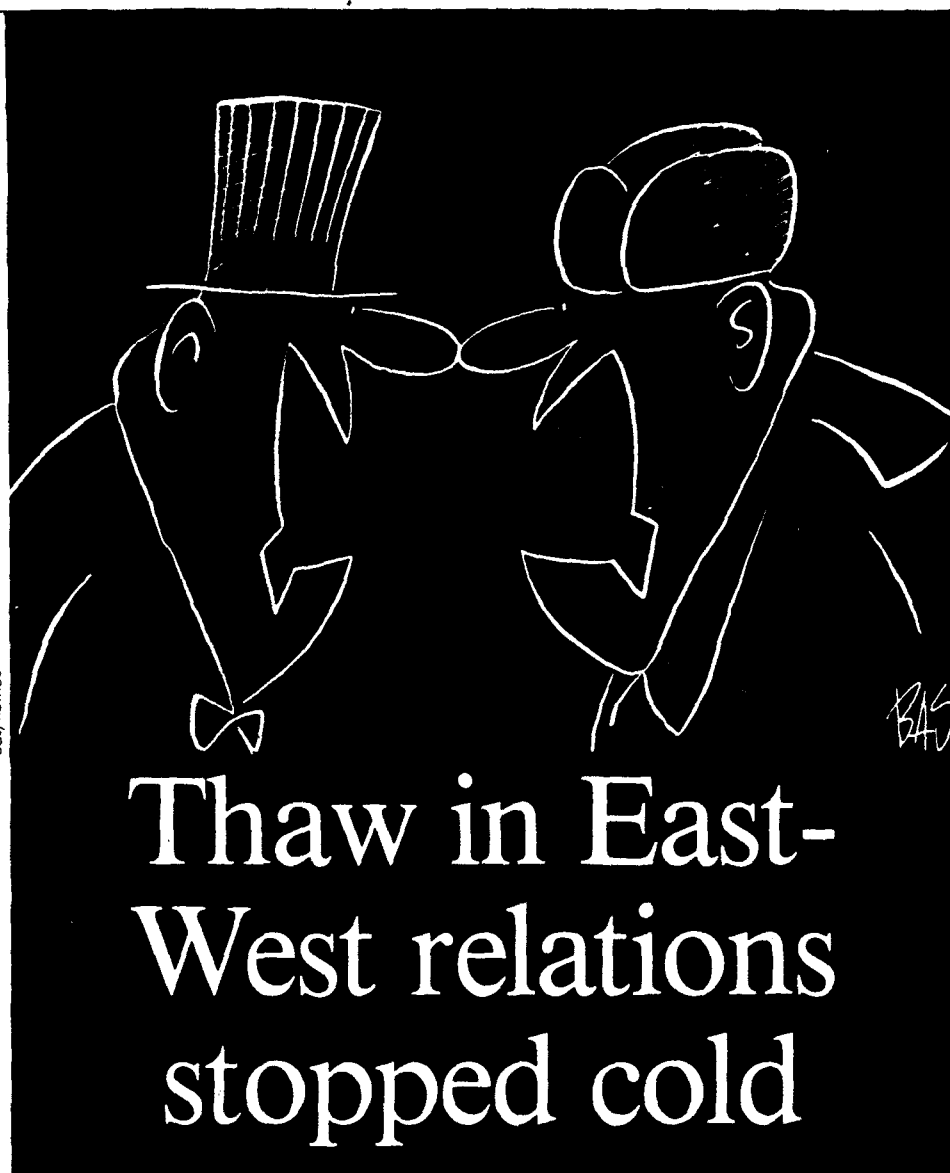
mediate range nuclear force talks (INF) to limit deployment by the U.S. of 572 Cruise and Pershing missiles to counter 250 Soviet SS-20 missiles already in place. Also in jeopardy is the attempt in the House of Representatives to block funds for the MX missile.

The installation of the missiles, particularly the Pershing II missiles slated for deployment in West Germany at the end of the year, are expected to have grave consequences for U.S.-Soviet relations. The Soviets have already threatened that if they are deployed, they will deploy new missiles in Eastern Europe, will withdraw from further arms control negotiations and will try to place American defenses in an analogous situation.

### State of shock.

Gerald Hough, staff member of the Brookings Institution, professor of political science at Duke University and co-author of the classic *How the Soviet Union is Governed*, points out that by itself the shooting down of the Korean plane need not have threatened U.S.-Soviet relations. But Hough mentions one important reason why the incident has poisoned relations: the Soviet's failure to make any gesture toward an apology and toward preventing further such incidents. Hough says of the Soviet leadership, "I think they could have even turned it to their advantage if they had handled it right."

Hough believes that the Soviets acted the way they did because of the leadership's reluctance to criticize the military and because the leadership is simply incapable of acting imaginatively in a crisis.



Hough had expected that Soviet Premier Andropov would replace some of the Brezhnev era officials who were in charge of foreign policy, but he notes that Andropov has left the Soviet apparatus virtually intact. He has even retained Brezhnev's press officer, "an unsophisticated or semi-sophisticated Cold Warrior," says Hough.

The second reason the incident has produced a crisis is the anti-Soviet hysteria that lies immediately below the surface in the American psyche. Americans are, of course, opposed to most dictatorships, but they tend to ascribe Hitlerian motives to Soviet actions. Once it surfaces, this hysteria can be exploited by the foes of arms control and proponents of larger military budgets.

Arthur Macy Cox, a former high-ranking State Department and CIA official and the author of the recent *Russian Roulette*, is a proponent of arms control and part of a coalition opposing the MX missile. In his recent speeches, Cox has been disturbed by the reaction he has witnessed to the airliner incident. "I think there is a tremendous, deep, profound feeling throughout the country about this thing, which in some ways is in just as much a state of shock as it was after the Afghan invasion," Cox said. "I think it certainly damages the work of people like me who are trying to control nuclear weapons."

Reagan, who has used the incident to bolster support for the MX and the military budget, has been attacked for "hand-wringing" by his opponents on both the left and far right. (See sidebar.) Conservative Caucus Chairman Howard Phillips declared that he would not support Reagan in 1984 because of his weak response. Former Vice-President Walter Mondale, currying Democratic primary votes in New Hampshire, said the president should have "been somewhat stronger" in his response.

### Arms control imperilled.

There is some disagreement among American experts about whether the U.S. and the Soviet Union were moving toward an INF agreement before the incident. Hough thinks they were, and that the agreement will not take place now. "I took the grain deal—which was a concession on the Soviet part as well as Reagan—and the agreement on the Madrid conference as an indication that they were moving toward a Pershing deal," Hough

told *In These Times*.

"But the problem with the Pershing deal is that it requires significant concessions on both sides. My impression is that President Reagan now has very little room to back down even if he wants to. I would think that the Soviets are under the same sort of pressure. Particularly at this time, in the wake of the barrage of propaganda, if they make a major concession, they might fear appearing to be weak."

Other experts, including Cox and Paul Warnke, the former head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, believe that the negotiations were hopeless anyway. Warnke thinks that the airliner incident will "just make it easier for the Reagan administration" to scotch the arms talks. "Neither [the INF nor the START talks] was going anyplace anyway," he said.

Warnke argues that the new INF proposals that the U.S. made this summer—replacing the zero-option with U.S.-Soviet numerical equality—were not really concessions at all. "All they do is restate a non-negotiable position, because the Soviet Union is not going to negotiate an

## Pusillanimous president?

Politicians love a chance to sound militant, especially when they know they have a supportive audience and that there is no chance their militance will be acted upon. President Reagan's unwillingness to impose significant sanctions on the Soviet Union after the shooting down of the Korean Airline flight 007 has unleashed a veritable torrent of tough talk.

Some is from liberals like former Vice-President Walter Mondale, looking to establish their own square-jawed credentials, but most is from Reagan's erstwhile supporters on the right. Last week, to counter a general declaration of condemnation offered by Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), a group of Republican senators proposed specific sanctions against the Soviets. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and Sen. Steven Symms (R-Idaho) had wanted their resolution to call for suspending arms talks with the Soviets, but to broaden their ranks they had to settle for a "comprehensive reapprais-

arms control agreement that ignores the British, Chinese and French forces."

Cox thinks that the Soviet proposals to reduce their 250 SS-20s to 162—equal to the number of British and French launchers—and to liquidate the difference rather than moving them East should have been the basis of serious negotiations, but that the Reagan administration was not interested in negotiations. "Then and today, the administration wants to deploy those weapons."

Cox believes that prior to the airliner incident there was a good chance to block deployment of the Pershing missiles in West Germany through political opposition there and here. But he no longer believes this.

Warnke acknowledges that this summer U.S.-Soviet agreements might eventually have led to an arms agreement. "Perhaps the overall atmosphere was beginning to improve and that would have meant some better chance of negotiations. But that has now been badly set back," he said.

### Setback.

Proponents of arms controls are also pessimistic now about the chances of defeating the MX missile. Prior to the September incident, there were signs that the opposition to the MX in the House might be able to defeat the \$187.5 billion military spending authorization that will be voted on this fall. The bill includes spending for both the MX missile and nerve gas.

Last May opponents of the MX had lost 239 to 186 in the House, but when they voted again in July, the margin narrowed to 220 to 207. An intensive lobbying campaign was underway this summer, spearheaded by the Stop the MX Project. But project director April Moore acknowledged, without admitting defeat, that the airliner incident has dealt the MX opposition a significant "setback."

The extent of that setback was evident in the Senate and House votes last week on the \$187.5 billion authorization. On September 14 it passed the Senate 83 to 8, and the next day it passed the House 266 to 152.

Moore is struck by the irony that the Soviet shooting down of the airliner has made arms control appear less rather than more desirable. "The shooting down of the plane is a real tragedy, and it certainly proves that there is no reason to trust the Russians," Moore said. "But that's all the more reason we need something like a freeze—where we can have verifiable specific objectives that both sides can agree to. If this can happen after they trail a plane for two hours, what would happen with the six minutes launch time of a Pershing?"

al" of U.S.-Soviet relations. The Helms-Symms resolution also called for reductions in Soviet diplomatic personnel in the U.S. and tighter controls on American technology exports to the Soviets.

Several conservative columnists and publications also took aim at the president. *New York Times*' William Safire accused the president of sounding off "more fiercely than Theodore Roosevelt and [of acting] more pusillanimously than Jimmy Carter." The conservative weekly *Human Events* reminded the president that "righteous anger...is important, but only if it leads to significant action."

Conservatives have advanced two theories of why Reagan acted the way he did. *Human Events* editors blame White House aides, who, they believe, convinced Reagan that he must do whatever he can to soften his bellicose image in order to close the "gender gap." And columnists Roland Evans and Robert Novak blame State Department fears that the suspension of arms control talks (which was recommended by the Defense Department) would foment Allied disunity and shift attention away from the airliner crash.

—J.B.J.



# IN SHORT

## Ask a loaded question...

With polls showing two-thirds of the British people opposed to deployment of U.S. Cruise missiles this year, the Reagan administration and its British allies know they have a public relations problem. But it's apparently been decided that the problem isn't the Cruise, it's the polls. The *New Statesman* reported at the end of August that a massive new poll, heavily weighted toward Cruise deployment, had been commissioned by an unknown customer widely believed to be the U.S. The 80-question survey places all queries in the context of Soviet nuclear superiority—based on inaccurate missile data—allowing the respondent to choose between defending Britain or Soviet domination. Answers that voice skepticism about Soviet nuclear belligerence or posit some middle ground between red and dead don't register on the poll. It also asks whether anti-Cruise demonstrations are likely to get *more violent*, an insinuation that has the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament up in (non-violent) arms.

National Opinion Poll (NOP), the pollster, won't officially identify its client, but sources within the organization told the *New Statesman* that it's the Reagan administration, and that similar surveys are planned for the rest of Western Europe. But such a poll, which will end up costing several hundred thousand dollars, could turn out to be worth every penny. While earlier surveys showed the British heavily opposed to the Cruise, the NOP effort got an 80 percent favorable response.

## Charity comeback

President Reagan's attempt to limit federal workers to supporting charities of his choice (*In These Times*, Feb. 9) was defeated again this month. An Office of Personnel Management (OPM) rule change announced last February that excluded non-profit advocacy groups from the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) was ruled a violation of free speech by U.S. District Court Judge Joyce Green in July, but OPM announced it would appeal the decision and published the new restrictions last month pretty much as written. Yet on September 1, OPM made public the list of eligible CFC charities and included the minority, women's and environmental groups the rule change had been designed to exclude. Robert Bothwell of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy calls the reversal a victory, but warns that the administration isn't dropping its crusade to limit the CFC. The most recent bureaucratic maneuver will force eligible charities to apply to individual workplace campaigns around the country—all 560 of them—rather than just solicit contributions nationally. Groups that don't have a "direct presence in the local campaign communities" won't be eligible for those campaigns. The local restriction is a "travesty," Bothwell said. "Why shouldn't an employee in Atlanta be able to support a charity concerned about Indian rights, even though that charity doesn't have an office in Atlanta?"

## Hard to swallow

Last week we contrasted Reagan's rhetorical concern about hunger with his administration's record on food assistance programs, thanks to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities' timely analysis. To follow up: Reagan recently named his Task Force on Food Assistance, and the Center reports that the appointees are conservative opponents of social welfare programs with no experience in federal food programs. Among the honorees are Dr. George Graham of Johns Hopkins University, who had the distinction of being the only person in the medical field to testify in favor of the administration's unsuccessful attempt to cut back the amount of food in school lunches; economist Kenneth Clarkson, author of a 1975 book that called for the abolition or replacement of the food stamp program; J.P. Bolduc, vice-president of W.R. Grace and chief operating officer of the President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control, which recommended benefit cuts for 96 percent of all food-stamp recipients, and Midge Decter, propagandist for tough-minded, thick-skinned neo-conservatism and opponent of bleeding-heart, limp-wristed liberalism. The only Democrat on the panel is former Massachusetts Gov. Edward King, whose attempts to cut back the state's welfare programs were a model for the Reagan administration. Less prominent appointees are active in voluntary social service efforts—soup kitchen directors and food bank organizers.

## Cruising

Although American opposition to Cruise missile deployment hasn't been as visible as European protest, Massachusetts students Lynne Weiss and Anne Wright did their part to attract attention to the cause. Alfie Kohn reports that the pair drove from western Massachusetts to San Francisco this summer with a life-size (18-foot) replica of a Cruise missile with a sign reading "15 times Hiroshima...Danger! Do NOT deploy in Europe." In Kansas, the reception was hostile; in Colorado they became instant celebrities. "The best part," said Weiss, "was getting a sense that there were other people in the world who were interested in this." Those wishing to "deploy" a Cruise replica can order one from Bill Starkweather at (413) 549-0034.

—Joan Walsh

## Court battle no jubilee

WEST OAKLAND, CA—A non-profit housing organization in the mostly black West of Cypress neighborhood here is gearing up for a court battle this month with the area's biggest landlord. But Jubilee West, Inc., isn't bringing the litigation, it's fighting it, facing charges of violating the civil rights of property owner Dr. Mark Klein, a Berkeley psychiatrist who is seeking \$50 million in damages.

The suit, which also names the Legal Aid Society, stems from Jubilee West's support for Klein tenants who have protested health and safety conditions in his buildings. But it also represents an escalation in the battle between local real estate interests and community groups fighting gentrification that has driven the poor from their homes in neighborhoods throughout the Bay Area.

Until three years ago West Oakland had seemed immune to the soaring land values of the east bay. Its old, dilapidated Victorians were an island of rental stability in a sea of housing inflation. The chronically poor and crime-plagued area, with unemployment above 20 percent, didn't attract the speculators that had transformed other neighborhoods. But market pressure eventually reached West of Cypress. Buildings were bought up and sold for a profit, rents went up and longtime tenants found themselves pushed from their homes.

Recognizing the warning signs of gentrification, community organizers consulted with a Washington, D.C., non-profit service organization, Jubilee Housing, Inc., and hatched a plan to start their own non-profit Jubilee West, and purchase residential units in the community before outside speculators bought control. Since then, Jubilee West, co-directed by Sisters Johanna Bramble and Pat Sears, has established a \$200,000 operating budget to oversee 15 units in five buildings (they hope to double that number by December) and to run a variety of poverty-fighting programs. Besides purchasing and renovating low-income housing, Jubilee West



Sisters Pat Sears (front) and Johanna Bramble (rear center) with Jubilee West backers.

operates an emergency assistance program to distribute food, furniture and other items to the neighborhood needy, offers job-development assistance to the unemployed and operates a youth training program in construction work.

Although Jubilee West is a success story so far, its future isn't guaranteed. A CETA grant for the training program runs out in September, and Section 8 housing subsidies will end in December, except for tenants who have already qualified.

The \$50 million lawsuit adds to that uncertainty. The suit follows months of wrangling in state Superior Court and tense public confrontations aimed at forcing Klein to negotiate with his dissatisfied tenants. Klein lost a bitter lawsuit to evict a tenant who had stopped paying rent to protest apartment conditions. The Legal Aid Society then filed suit on behalf of three other tenants charging substandard housing conditions. After Klein walked out of an angry community meeting, 35 people arrived at his home and demonstrated with placards and handbills labeling him a slumlord. The protests became a

weekly event, first at his home, then at his office.

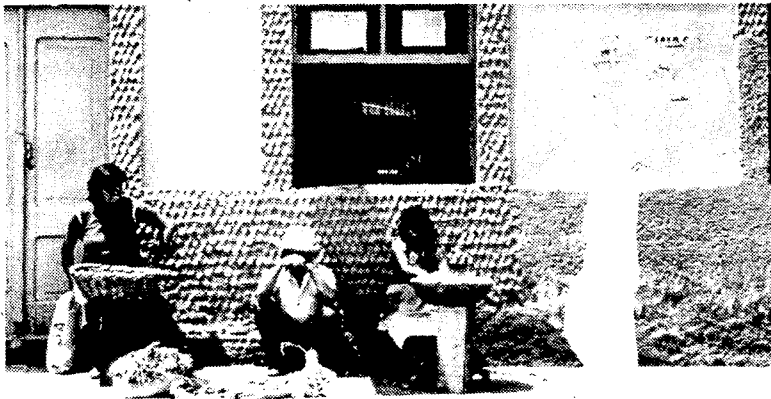
Klein filed suit, arguing that the demonstrations were not only a public embarrassment but an attempt to violate his civil rights by forcing him into an extra-judicial settlement before the Legal Aid cases reach trial. He charges Jubilee West with trying to drive him out of West Oakland and to keep the neighborhood black. "I had been renting to Oriental immigrants and people I could do credit checks on, but [Bramble] warned me that if I rented to anyone other than local blacks I would face demonstrations," Klein said. "These people are in the same business as I am, and they don't want competition."

Bramble and others named in the suit insist the demonstrators were within their legal rights, and call Klein's move harassment. They deny that they objected to Klein's renting to Orientals and say their only concern is insuring that West Oakland residents have decent, affordable housing. "I never said, nor implied, that he should not rent to Asians," said Bramble. "The issue is money, not race."

—J.H. Evans

## Disappearing democracy

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS—Ines Consuelo Murrillo Ache, a 24-year-old Honduran law student, was arrested last March by men in plain clothes, believed to be members of the *Inteligencia Mili-*



"Disappearances" are increasing in Honduras, Reagan's showplace Central American democracy.

tar. Why she was seized was never officially announced. Her mother, Ines Murrillo, says she thinks it was "because Ines was working for the unions, and for poor people in the city."

Normally no one would have heard of Ines Consuelo again; she would have joined the ranks of the *desaparecidos*—the people who disappear. But she was lucky. Her mother works for the United Nations in Honduras and was able to publicize her daughter's case and bring pressure to bear on the government. After two-and-a-half months, Ines "reappeared" and is now in jail awaiting trial, accused of being a terrorist. That charge, her mother says, is absurd. "My daughter was forced to sign a statement, that is the only proof they have."

Since 1981, 49 Honduran citizens have disappeared. Only six of them have reappeared. More



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than 100 foreigners living in Honduras have disappeared, among them at least 32 Salvadorans. Compared to other Latin American countries, these numbers are not exceptionally high. But Honduras has been held up to the world by the Reagan administration as an example for Central America, its civilian government a showcase for democracy.

"We are a country that is supposed to be peaceful, and to export the idea of peace," says Dr. Ramon Custodio, a physician in the capital of Tegucigalpa and chairman of the Honduran Committee for the Defense of Human Rights. "So it is unbelievable that in such a country, under a civilian government, there should be any disappearances at all. One is too much."

Political repression in Honduras—disappearances, death squads and executions—may be small in scale, but its impact is significant. "When the government is not able to handle or to control a certain group, when they want to suppress activities, they just kidnap or kill the main leaders, and then the group will disintegrate," says Custodio.

It is expected that the repression will increase. Honduras is a very poor country—the second poorest in Central America, after Haiti—where the average per

capita income is \$565 a year; among the farmers who make up three-quarters of the population, yearly income can be as low as \$60.

U.S. economic influence is significant. Salvadoran soldiers and U.S. money support the Nicaraguan *contras* who use the country as a base for attacks against the Sandinistas.

The January 1982 inauguration of a civilian president, Roberto Suazo Cordova, was to have moved the country toward democracy. But some observers say the situation has actually worsened. According to a Western diplomat in Tegucigalpa: "Under democracy there has been more oppression than under the dictatorship. Now if you strike you are dealt with far more harshly than before because you are obviously a Communist attacking democracy." Adds Custodio: "Judges say that they are helpless in front of the police. They cannot do anything."

Protest is coming from outside the system. The Committee for the Defense of Human rights, along with an active Committee of the Families of the Disappeared, publicize the repression. Ads appear in local papers protesting the disappearances. However, says Custodio, there are few people who can afford to protest. —Benno Groeneveld

## Good news for Boston's left

BOSTON—After years of grassroots work, Boston's neighborhood movement is now bearing political fruit. At least 10 candidates for City Council and School Committee are products of this city's community organizations, drawing on their issues, skills and volunteers to mount campaigns for public office.

A 1981 charter reform referendum changed both the council and the School Committee from at-large elections to a mixed system of four at-large and nine district seats. The new set-up has generated strong neighborhood interest, and increased voter registration, giving left candidates with grassroots support a good chance of winning both the October 11 preliminary and November 25 run-off elections. With two of its candidates—Ray Flynn and Mel King—doing well in the crowded race to succeed Mayor Kevin White (*In These Times*, Sept. 7, and this issue, page 17), Boston's left could wield considerable influence in coming years.

David Scondras, the city's leading tenant organizer and a member of Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), is a strong contender to win a council seat from his Fenway, Back Bay/Beacon Hill, Mission Hill district. The only gay candidate running for public office in Boston, Scondras has the strong backing of tenants' groups, senior citizen organizations, unions and leaders of the black and Hispanic communities. Two years ago, Scondras just missed winning a place on the at-large council; his neighborhood ties make district-level success more likely.

In 1981, Felix Arroyo was the first Hispanic to run for citywide

office in Boston. Arroyo, an educator and Children's Advocacy Network staffer, is continuing his quest for a citywide School Committee seat, but this time with a tighter campaign organization and the support of Hispanic, black, neighborhood, gay and union groups, DSA (of which he's a member) and a long list of politicians, including Gov. Michael Dukakis.

Henry Allen, a district candidate for School Committee, is a veteran of Boston's school reform wars during the past two decades. A leader in the struggles for school desegregation and parent involvement, Allen has drawn support not only from parents around the city, but also from the strong progressive network in his Jamaica Plain neighborhood. Like Arroyo, Allen is stressing the need for state tax reform to fund Boston's troubled public schools (Massachusetts ranks 43rd in state aid to education) and decentralized community control of school administration. Less than one-tenth of all Boston households have children in public school; in a city with only 25 percent minorities, 70 percent of the public school students are black, Hispanic or Asian.

Other candidates with significant grassroots support include School Committee hopefuls Craig Lankhorst, a black school teacher and Mission Hill activist, and William Marchione, an Allston-Brighton community leader, and black incumbent Jean McGuire, the leading critic of the current school superintendent. Would-be left City Council members include Charles Yancey of Dorchester, leader of the Black Political Task Force; community organizers Brian McLaughlin of Allston-Brighton and Willie Allen of Mattapan, and Althea Garrison and Ben Haith of Roxbury. —Peter Dreier

## Briefing: UAW roundup

After granting an estimated \$1.1 billion in concessions that helped to bring Chrysler from bankruptcy in 1979 to \$482 million in profits for the first half of this year, Chrysler workers have finally started on the road back. A Labor Day contract that will yield \$2.42 an hour in wage increases by September 1985 will bring 60,000 Chrysler workers close to parity with Ford and GM workers (except for wage increases Big Two autoworkers win a year from now). Pension benefits were also raised.

Talks broke off earlier this summer when Chrysler refused the union's pay demands and requested further takeaways in health benefits and cost-of-living protection. But the threat of a strike next January brought Chrysler management back to bargaining.

The company's future profitability hinges more on the overall recovery—and thus auto sales, which are up from last year but still sputtering—and on changes in yen and dollar exchange rates than on the results of bargaining with the union. Despite higher fixed labor costs than other companies, Chrysler can still reap hefty profits under this contract if economic conditions are good. ■

As the UAW starts negotiations for the portion of the nation's 1.2 million aerospace workers it represents, it faces a new force behind company demands for worker concessions:

costs. Production worker payrolls account for only 16 percent of the cost of aerospace shipments, according to a 1981 Commerce Department study. And, *Solidarity* reports, "holding aerospace wage increases to the average level for all manufacturing...would have reduced fiscal 1982 defense outlays by less than one-third of 1 percent."

Three UAW stewards at the Kenosha, Wisc., American Motors plant have a different problem with their employer. On October 31 they go to trial in a \$4.2 million libel lawsuit brought by four ex-foremen and an hourly employee (whose father is a supervisor) in 1980. The five claimed they were libeled by the newsletter *Fighting Times*, edited by the stewards. According to testimony the defendants have secured, AMC financed the lawsuit, and the regional National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) last April issued a complaint against the company, upholding the stewards and recommending that the corporate-financed suit be dropped (*In These Times*, June 1).

But the basis of the NLRB action was set in the case of Bill Johnson's Restaurant, which protected union organizers and activists from unfair prosecution for libel and slander. In May the Supreme Court overturned that decision, and the NLRB consequently called off its August hearing of the

officials, who have been outspoken in the past, wanted to be part of negotiations to insure that seniority rights would be respected in recalling workers and that the international would not make major concessions—which many expect Toyota-GM to demand. But the international ruled that because the plant had closed, the local no longer existed. The court refused to temporarily restrain the international before a September 15 hearing on the case.

Former UAW Regional Director Paul Schrade, now a Rockwell International aerospace worker, has been a stern critic of the procedure by which the UAW reaffiliated with the AFL-CIO in 1981. (A series of regional conferences were held instead of a special convention, but the international executive board claimed it had authority to reaffiliate, even without those advisory votes.) On September 10 he took his case to the union's Public Review Board, the panel of outside experts authorized to hear appeals by members against union officials. Law professor Clyde Summers, an authority on union democracy, considers the case very significant, especially since the Public Review Board has never before been willing to overrule the union's top officers on matters of policy or, in this case, interpretation of the union constitution.

In a detailed review of UAW constitutional history, Schrade argues that affiliation with bodies like the AFL-CIO has always been decided by conventions, and that the international executive board



Chrysler workers' new contract returns them to parity with Ford and GM employees.

the Reagan administration and the Pentagon.

Last year, according to the UAW's *Solidarity* magazine, Air Force Secretary Verne Orr told subordinates to try to hold wage settlements for private industry workers in line with the austerity increases for federal employees, even if it meant a strike. More recently, the chief of the Air Force System Command requested that Boeing "curtail further increases" in wages. Similar communications have been sent to other defense contractors, urging control of health costs and wages.

The UAW suggests there are better ways to cut military

complaint against AMC. Now stewards Jon Melrod, John Drew and Tod Ohnstad are raising defense funds for this important case. (Contributions should go to Alvin Ugent—Union Free Speech Defense Fund, 207 E. Michigan, Milwaukee, WI 53202.) ■

Officials of Local 1364 of the UAW lost the first round of their court battle, not against their employer but against the international union on September 7. The union had represented the Fremont, Calif., General Motors plant, now closed but scheduled to reopen under joint Toyota-GM management. Local

could not act on its own. Further, citing minutes of executive board meetings, he argues that in recent years the board was more worried about how to keep reaffiliation out of local union politics than about the constitutional issues it raised.

Schrade's ultimate concern, however, is what he sees as a general drift away from membership decision-making in favor of a more centralized union, controlled by a self-perpetuating caucus insulated from competition. The way reaffiliation was decided, he says, is one worrisome example of such abuse of power.

—David Moberg



# IN THE NATION

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

# Safety last: OSHA stalls cancer curbs

By Harvy Lipman

WASHINGTON

**J**IMMY GOODE KNOWS ALL TOO well what working with asbestos can do to a person. He spent more than a decade working in the shipyards of Baltimore, and it cost him four feet of his intestine and a chunk of his lung. Also, his father died of asbestos-induced cancer.

"Once you got working in there," Goode said of the shipyards he worked in, "it was like a constant snowfall. You get 15 or 20 guys on a ship cutting asbestos, and it's all over the place. But back then we didn't know it was harmful."

Goode stopped working in the shipyards in 1972. Now he spends his time as an officer in an asbestos workers' local in Baltimore. Much of his job focuses on making sure his fellow workers never have to face the horrifying news he received three years ago: that he had cancer, caused by over-exposure to asbestos.

In fact, there's reason to believe that most of his co-workers are much less likely to hear that diagnosis from their doctors. Maryland's unions pushed a strong bill through the state legislature tightening up the restrictions on worker exposure to asbestos. But workers in other states haven't been so fortunate. And despite the extensive scientific evidence about the hazards of asbestos, the thousands of lawsuits by workers against asbestos manufacturers and the enormous media coverage of the issue, federal regulations for the protection of those workers are still virtually in the Dark Ages.

Writing those regulations is the job of

the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The current OSHA rule allows workers to be exposed to two asbestos fibers per cubic centimeter of air. At that level, according to an OSHA risk assessment completed in August of 1981, at least 16,000 workers will develop asbestos-related cancers during their lifetimes. And that's just the study's minimum estimate. It also notes that as many as half a million workers run a greatly increased risk of developing cancer at that exposure level.

Yet in the two years since that assessment was produced, OSHA still has not proposed a lower standard for worker exposure. OSHA Director Thorne Auchter, who has been under heavy congressional pressure to put out a new standard, told a congressional subcommittee earlier this year that a new standard would be out by December. And in fact a team of OSHA scientists is frantically working on a new proposal, which could be ready to be sent to Labor Secretary Ray Donovan within the next week or two. Auchter has even proposed that the regulation be designated as an emergency temporary standard, which would allow it to take effect almost immediately. If approved by Donovan, that would be the first emergency standard put out in the nearly three years Auchter has run the agency.

In fact, Auchter and his aides have ignored their staff scientists' recommendations for more stringent controls on a variety of cancer-causing substances. And in the 31 months since Ronald Reagan appointed Auchter to run the federal agency responsible for protecting workers' safety, OSHA has not produced a single standard for any chemical that was



Earl Dotter

not already regulated.

In one case, Auchter even went so far as to try to fire Dr. Peter Infante, OSHA's director of Carcinogen Identification, for pressing the agency to put out a stronger standard on formaldehyde. Currently, workers can be exposed to three particles of formaldehyde per million particles of air. But in a series of memos and reports in 1981 and 1982, Infante and Dr. Han Kang, who was then director of OSHA's health standards program, found that at the allowable limit nearly one out of every thousand workers exposed to formaldehyde would develop nasal cancers. The National Institute for

Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) estimates that more than half a million workers are exposed to formaldehyde annually. If all were subjected to the legal limit, Infante and Kang calculated, about 5,000 would develop cancer.

Kang's preliminary risk assessment, issued in July of 1981 but never adopted as official OSHA policy, found that cutting the allowable limit to one part per million would eliminate more than 80 percent of those cancers.

Infante wrote a personal letter in May of 1981 to Dr. John Higginson, then director of the International Agency for Research on Cancer, complaining about the

## Settling on less safety

Setting health and safety standards is only half of OSHA's job. Obviously, if the agency doesn't adequately enforce those standards, the regulations themselves become useless. Ronald Reagan rode into the White House on a promise to get government off the people's...or more specifically, business' back. Nowhere is that philosophy more evident than at OSHA.

During Thorne Auchter's first year as OSHA administrator, the total penalties assessed by the agency against industries that violated worker safety rules dropped by about 50 percent. The number of "serious" violations written up by OSHA inspectors also fell 50 percent, while the number of "willful" violations fell 86 percent.

Auchter doesn't dispute these statistics. Indeed, he's proud of them. In his testimony before a House subcommittee last spring, Auchter extolled the virtues of his "settlement policy," under which OSHA area directors are urged to negotiate agreements with industries rather than penalize them for violations.

"The area director settlement policy is one of the more successful things that OSHA has been able to do in the last few years," Auchter beamed. He argued that because of the high penalties assessed by the previous administration, nearly a quarter of all OSHA citations were being contested in court. That led to fewer inspections, he said, "because our people were in court all

the time."

Auchter concluded that informal settlements between area directors and industry executives were the solution. Indeed, so much so that OSHA began evaluating area directors by the number of contested citations they had. The more citations contested, the lower evaluation a director received. Many past and present OSHA enforcement workers claim that arrangement created a built-in incentive not to issue any citation unless there was no question of it being contested in court.

"They said, 'We don't want to get tied up in litigation because compliance is not achieved then.' I worked for OSHA for 10 years, and I never saw that happen. They [industry] comply and then they contest."

That's how Milan Racic reacts to Auchter's policy. Racic, a long-time OSHA enforcement officer, is now health and safety director for the Allied Industrial Workers of America. "They're setting quotas and it's having a chilling effect on the entire process. You can end up without your raise if you don't meet their goals."

A couple of examples help indicate the kinds of cases OSHA is now settling—at vastly reduced penalties. On New Year's Eve in 1981, Leon Kruchten and his supervisor, Bud Seidlinger, were sent out to repair a damaged power station in the Oscar Mayer and Company plant in Madison, Wisc. As the two men began to work on the power lines, there

was a sudden flash. Both woke up in the hospital, each severely burned and having lost an arm.

An OSHA inspector investigated the accident and determined that Oscar Mayer had failed to follow government guidelines requiring electrical switches to have "lock boxes"—devices that prevent someone from turning the power on. That's what happened to Kruchten and Seidlinger: a worker in another part of the plant, unaware that the power had been switched off because of the repair work, turned the switch back on while the two men were working on the wires.

The inspector ruled this was a serious violation and issued a \$640 fine. But at one of Auchter's informal settlement meetings, attended by local OSHA administrators, the company and a union steward, the citation was downgraded and the penalty dropped.

A similar settlement was reached in a case involving the Coors Container Company in Colorado, a division of Adolph Coors breweries. On Sept. 2, 1982, two workers died after being overcome by toxic chemical fumes while cleaning out a brewery tank. The OSHA inspector recommended that the company be cited for a number of serious violations, including the failure to provide adequate respirators for the workers, failure to set up and train workers on emergency safety procedures and failure to test the air in the tank for dangerous levels of the chemical. He recommended an \$810 fine. Yet once again the fine was dropped and the violations downgraded after an informal conference.

But such settlements are only part of the problem, according to OSHA workers (OSHA administrators responsible for enforcement policies declined to be interviewed). One Midwest OSHA worker complained that much of what the inspectors do now are simply "paper inspections." "What those inspections actually are is a records review. We go in, and if the company's records indicate they have more lost worker days than the industry average, we do an inspection."

But the inspector noted that there's "really nothing" to prevent an employer from keeping false records. "In fact,

*Despite a rash of damning new scientific evidence, OSHA has failed to produce a single standard for any chemical that was not already regulated before 1981.*



Robert Gumpert





agency's refusal to identify formaldehyde as a carcinogen. Higginson responded by writing to Auchter, objecting to Infante's "interference." Less than a week later, the Formaldehyde Institute sent a hand-delivered letter to Auchter, complaining that Infante was one more example of "bureaucrats running wild." At the end of June, Infante was told he would be fired.

Infante challenged his dismissal in court, and when a congressional subcommittee also began pressuring Auchter, OSHA's director backed off.

But the formaldehyde controversy has not died down. Late last month the United Auto Workers and the American Public Health Association filed suit in U.S. District Court in Washington, charging OSHA with ignoring its own internal studies on formaldehyde and asking the court to order the agency to put out a stricter regulation.

#### EDB inaction.

OSHA has also dropped from consideration proposed standards for a wide range of chemicals, which were due for action before Auchter took over. Among these are heavy metals like chromium, cadmium, nickel and manganese—all proven human carcinogens. One recent Swedish study found that about half the workers exposed to 12-and-a-half micrograms of cadmium per cubic meter of air would

it's most likely that they are keeping lower figures, if for no other reason than to keep their insurance and workers' compensation rates down."

One New Jersey case shows how misleading those "paper inspections" can be. OSHA conducted a records check at the Kappus Plastic Company in Hampton, N.J., on June 30, 1982. The inspector found that company workers were missing far fewer days than the industry average, and quickly gave the plant a clean bill of health without ever stepping inside the factory.

Six months later, the state Department of Health was notified by a local doctor that one of his patients, who worked at the Kappus plant, had dangerously high levels of lead in his blood. Health Department staffers visited the plant and tested the workers. They found that seven of the workers had equally dangerous lead levels. The staffers then walked through the plant and discovered that the equipment used to mix a powder containing lead had visible holes and leaks, and the ventilation equipment was inadequate. In addition, the operator did not have adequate protective clothing or equipment. Workers were being exposed to lead levels four times higher than OSHA regulations allow.

But this is not a case where an insensitive company was purposely ignoring worker safety. Kappus Plastics is a family-owned venture—and, in fact, at least two of the workers with elevated lead levels were members of the Kappus family. When the Health Department officials told company executives about the problem, they replied, "Why didn't

## Cancer risks associated with EDB are among the highest OSHA has confronted.

suffer irreversible kidney damage. The current American limit is 200 micrograms. That means about 7,500 American factory workers are likely to become seriously ill from working on manufacturing processes using cadmium.

A preliminary draft study on the cancer risk to workers in nickel refineries issued by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in May says, "The evidence is incontrovertible that nickel refinery workers were at significantly higher risks for cancer of the lungs and nasal cavity." That study cites a series of research reports indicating that such workers are about 25 times more likely than the rest of the population to contract nasal cancers, and four times as likely to get lung cancer. NIOSH has recommended lowering the allowable limit for nickel to .001 parts per million—or about 15 times lower than the current standard. Yet

OSHA tell us we had a problem?"

In fact, the management didn't know there was an OSHA safety standard for lead and was ignorant of the possible health effects. The process by which workers were being exposed is a common one—one that can be corrected relatively easily by present technology. The only reason Kappus wasn't meeting OSHA standards was that no one from the agency—including the inspector who had just been to their offices—had bothered to tell them about the standards.

Present and recently resigned OSHA enforcement workers also complain about three other shifts in policy under Auchter: a directive ordering a reduction in the use of the "general worker health and safety" clause, the section of the OSHA law used to cite companies for clear health and safety violations that aren't covered by specific standards; an addition to the inspection form that gives industry the ability to assess an inspector's performance; and a policy change restricting an inspector's ability to cite problems discovered during an inspection that are not directly related to the complaint that brought the enforcement worker to the plant in the first place.

"I quit working for those guys and took a job of equal pay in a state 2,000 miles away because I was fed up with the agency," says one former enforcement worker now employed by another government agency. "Thorne Auchter said he was going to make OSHA inspection officers feel proud. The effect was the opposite. I was ashamed to be working there."

—H.L.

OSHA has taken nickel off its list of substances to be acted upon this year.

Perhaps the most dramatic case illustrating OSHA's inaction concerns the pesticide ethylene dibromide, or EDB. It is the fumigant that was sprayed on California's citrus crop during the Medfly scare, and according to a 1980 EPA report, the cancer risks associated with EDB are "among the highest risks the agency has ever confronted."

An EDB risk assessment done by Dr. David Brown of Boston's Northeastern University found that at exposures of 10 parts per million (half the current OSHA standard), about 270 out of every 1,000 workers using EDB had a high risk of developing nasal tumors. Brown concluded that as many as eight out of every 10 workers exposed to the current OSHA limit are likely to develop cancer. More than 100,000 Americans have jobs that expose them to EDB.

#### Too little, too late.

Last week OSHA proposed a new EDB standard lowering the allowable exposure limit to .1 part per million. But there is considerable scientific evidence suggesting that even that level is too high. NIOSH Director Dr. J. Donald Millar wrote Auchter last September, warning him of a new study that showed significant risks to workers at even .065 parts per million. And as California Rep. George Miller berated Auchter at a hearing before Miller's subcommittee on labor standards September 13—six years after OSHA first learned of EDB's dangers—"workers are still being covered by a 12-year-old standard everybody agrees is inadequate."

Both the Teamsters and the AFL-CIO filed petitions in 1981 asking OSHA to set a new emergency standard, but the agency rejected them. That decision certainly wasn't supported by OSHA scientists responsible for assessing the risk of EDB. Dr. Victor Alexander was the senior medical officer in OSHA's Office of Occupational Medicine until he resigned in protest over a series of OSHA actions—or rather inactions—in July of 1982.

"The documentation they [OSHA administrators] were given was very solid," Alexander told *In These Times*. "But what they eventually released to the public was scientifically very weak. The people making the decision made a lot of editorial judgments for which they had no technical knowledge. The people responsible for issuing new guidelines didn't know what they were doing."

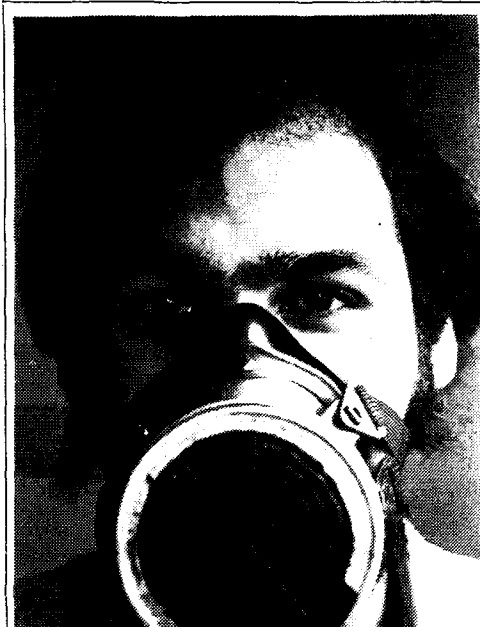
Dr. Patricia Sparks left OSHA in April of 1982 to become medical director at Burlington Industries in North Carolina. At that time she was acting director of the Office of Occupational Medicine. "We recommended that an emergency temporary standard be promulgated for EDB. We tried to give them a risk assessment, but that was ignored. The case of EDB is clear cut. There's a lot of evidence that, both in the short term and the long term, it's a carcinogen in animals."

"And it's a direct-acting carcinogen—it doesn't have to mix with other chemicals or turn into something else in the body," she continues. "It seems to damage DNA directly. There's also evidence that EDB has harmful effects on the reproductive system. I think they [OSHA's administrators] understood the scientific data. Perhaps they didn't take it as seriously as a trained toxicologist would. But their priorities are in the political realm: loyalty to the party that put them there."

Sparks and Alexander were two of the four scientists in the Office of Occupational Medicine when Auchter took over. Less than two years later, all four had quit. "The morale was absolutely terrible," says Sparks.

"Professionals will do the best they can," adds Alexander, now on the staff of the Ochsner Clinic in New Orleans. "They will continue to try to do the job—

Continued on page 10



Robert Gumpert

## What you don't know can kill you

What good is a standard limiting worker exposure to a toxic chemical, if workers can't find out what chemicals they're being exposed to?

That's the paradox many American workers now find themselves confronted with. Employers, often claiming they would be giving away trade secrets if they revealed what is in the formulas workers are mixing, frequently withhold that information. Thus labor unions have been pressing OSHA almost since the agency's inception for a rule that would force industry to tell workers when they're working with hazardous substances.

In the last days of the Carter administration, OSHA finally drew up such a "Hazard Communication Rule." It was designed to make employers tell workers about any chemical the government put on a list of dangerous substances, while still offering the company the chance to protect its trade secrets. One of the new OSHA administration's first acts was to withdraw the rule and get to work on a new version.

Faced with the prospect of a weak rule—or no rule at all—the unions and health advocates organized campaigns around the country to get state and local "worker right-to-know laws" passed. That effort was quite successful, with about 30 states passing such laws.

The new OSHA proposal came out in March of 1982. It left the definition of a hazardous substance up to industry and allowed companies to designate substances as trade secrets without offering any documentation to back up their claim. Perhaps worst of all, from the unions' point of view, was a clause pre-empting local and state laws.

"The chemical companies and OSHA are out to challenge those laws," charges Margaret Seminario, industrial hygienist with the AFL-CIO's department of occupational safety and health. "That's what this rule is all about."

The agency held hearings on the rule in the summer of 1982 and drew heated opposition from the unions (who had originally sought the rule) and support from the chemical industry (which had originally opposed it). A final version is due within a month or so.

"The basic shape hasn't been altered, but we've made refinements," says one OSHA staffer working on the rule. "We've made an attempt to fill in the definition of what chemicals are to be considered hazards. It will still be the manufacturer's determination, but based on more detailed criteria. The list of OSHA regulated substances will sort of automatically be covered, as will the International Agency for the Research of Cancer list of carcinogens."

Seminario has also seen one of that later drafts of the rule. She agrees that it has "better definitions" of what substances must be considered hazards. "But the language on trade secrets is getting worse," she insists. "One cancels out the other. The bottom line is the trade secrets language is so broad you could drive a truck through it."

—H.L.



By Gary Peck &amp; Richard Guarasci

OPELIKA, ALA.

**A**N ESTIMATED 35,000 AMERICAN textile workers are afflicted by brown lung, a crippling and sometimes fatal disease associated with cotton dust inhalation. Despite recent precedent-setting settlements of six brown lung victims with West Point-Pepperell mills (*In These Times*, Aug. 10), the Reagan administration's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) policy—characterized by staff cutbacks, reduced enforcement activities and the weak unionization of textile industries in the South—make brown lung a continued threat to American textile workers.

Also, Reagan administration officials recently announced their intention to relax OSHA's 1978 cotton dust standard limiting allowable emissions, and are conducting public hearings this month in Dallas, Columbia, S.C., and Washington, D.C. This effort follows an unsuccessful 1981 attempt to have the Supreme Court vacate lower court decisions upholding the standard and reaffirming OSHA's mandate to set regulations without cost-benefit analysis under life-threatening situations.

In the past two and a half years, policies pursued by OSHA's new director and Assistant Secretary of Labor Thorne Auchter have led to the closing of 45 OSHA offices, lay-offs of 250 OSHA staff members and a severe reduction in expenditures. Safety standards have also been reviewed, rescinded and attacked. The agency cut back job site inspections by 21 percent, compliance inspections by 32 percent, follow-up inspections by 72 percent, serious citations by 50 percent and total penalties by about 50 percent.

Moreover, OSHA refused AFL-CIO's useful inspection data and began voluntary enforcement that encourages industry self-inspection and in effect grants exemption from routine OSHA inspections.

## OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

# OSHA cuts mean more brown lung

These policies have consequently reduced the Brown Lung Association's (BLA) size and activities. Composed predominantly of disabled and retired textile workers in North and South Carolina, Virginia, Georgia and Alabama, the BLA staff has shrunk from more than 40 in 1980 to its current low of one part-timer because of cuts in OSHA's New Direction grants to the BLA. The number of chapters has fallen from 17 to nine, and active membership has diminished substantially.

Although BLA reductions have not halted significant work like the West Point-Pepperell cases in Alabama, political actions in Georgia and ongoing compensation battles in both Carolinas, the future of the association is clouded by declining resources, the textile industry's increased influence in OSHA and the White House and political and economic troubles manufacturers in the South face.

## Job security, unionization.

The recession has produced significant unemployment in textiles at a time when companies face growing competition from newly industrialized nations—a problem exacerbated by the recent trade agreement increasing allowable imports from mainland China and the massive investment programs in labor displacing technology. Unemployment is South Carolina now stands at 13 percent, fourth highest in the U.S., and many jobs are likely permanently lost.

According to former BLA organizer Frank Blechman, "In some areas of the

fifth congressional district, unemployment is running more than 30 percent and the district as a whole is more than 20 percent.

In a state where commitment to social spending has been described as "congenitally mean, cheap and shallow," the permanent loss of an estimated 40,000 textile jobs has been particularly devastating. Yet Bill Spann, business agent for Columbia's local 254 of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU), admits that "the half-empty parking lots are probably here to stay" as

## The Brown Lung Association staff has shrunk from more than 40 in 1980 to its current low of just one part-time worker because of cuts in OSHA's New Direction grants.

air-jet looms and other technical changes ripple through the industry.

Textile industry resistance to more efficient technologies was countered by the first successful unionization drives in recent times. In October 1980, after a 17-year struggle, ACTWU finally negotiated a contract with nine J.P. Stevens plants in Roanoke Rapids, N.C. While these facilities have witnessed increased employment levels simultaneous with technological renovation, mills like the one in Columbia, S.C., have suffered major job losses.

In Roanoke Rapids, where the union has monitored compliance with OSHA's cotton dust standard, requiring engineering controls over permissible shop-floor emission levels, Stevens has invested too heavily to consider shutting down its plants.

According to Eric Frumin, safety and health director for ACTWU, in 1977 J.P. Stevens had to put in new equipment because of gross violations of the cotton dust standard, which were being closely evaluated by the union during its long battle before the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and the federal courts. "The standard forced the company to modernize," says Frumin, "and employment has actually increased there."

The cotton dust standard has generated productivity increases in top textile firms that chose early compliance. According to an ACTWU study of seven such companies, the regulation has facilitated profitability relative to the rest of the industry during this compliance period. Although these businesses have suffered declines during the recession, they are significantly better off than textiles as a whole.

## OSHA reviews cotton dust.

Although it remains unclear whether the combination of the cotton dust standard, new international trade agreements and the union's selective presence can guarantee even limited job security, it is certain that the administration plans to seriously dilute the regulation. Among his earliest actions, President Reagan issued an executive order establishing the Regulatory Task Force under Vice-President George Bush's leadership. This order subjected all proposed regulations to cost-benefit analysis and approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In January OSHA notified OMB of planned revisions in the cotton dust standard, sparking a six-month bureaucratic conflict between the two agencies. OMB Director David Stockman wanted OSHA to

make even more extensive changes than had been outlined, particularly in requirements for engineering controls over emission levels. Agreeing with the American Textile Manufacturers' Institute (ATMI), the industry's major lobbyist, OMB favored using personal respirators rather than "costly" machine redesigns as a means of reducing dust inhalation.

ATMI pushed for an increase in the permissible exposure level (PEL) of cotton dust, even though there was no scientifically acceptable data to back up its stance. Yet while OSHA upheld requirements for engineering controls and refused to raise the PEL, it did suggest modifications that would allow relaxed medical surveillance, environmental monitoring and employee training by companies. Moreover, the agency rejected any wage retention clause that would permit at-risk workers to change jobs without loss of pay. The Supreme Court upheld such clauses in a 1981 review of the lead standard, but instructed OSHA to develop a sounder rationale regarding health consequences when ruling on the

1978 cotton dust standard that same year. Auchter simply ignored the Court's mandate.

If adopted, the OSHA modifications would markedly relax, but not irrevocably damage, the existing standard. A more serious problem is generally lax enforcement, particularly after Auchter instituted his "voluntary compliance" program. Apart from ACTWU's limited impact in select unionized plants, political pressure for adequate enforcement and for state and federal legislation has come from the BLA. Despite significant staff reductions, it remains active in specific locations.

In Raleigh, N.C., for example, 100 members statewide attended legislative hearings on a proposed disability apportionment bill. The law would have distinguished between degrees of disability, thereby making pro-rated compensation to byssinosis victims possible, and would have reduced the liability of textile manufacturers and their insurance carriers.

Mary Lou Seymore, a recently laid-off staffer, says the BLA in Georgia is attempting to forge coalitions with other environmentally conscious groups within and without the workplace. "The problem doesn't stop at the plant gates," she notes. "It goes into the rest of the community." Thus, the Augusta chapter has aligned itself with neighborhood groups concerned about two large toxic waste dump sites. They have also joined forces with chemical workers exposed to DNA, a substance suspected of causing bladder cancer, and to ETO, a gas linked with cataracts and leukemia.

The BLA was also instrumental in pushing the Georgia legislature to revise its statute of limitations on filing for Workman's Compensation, a major victory in a state where the guidelines were among the most stringent in the country.

The picture is different in South Carolina, where, despite efforts like those in Aiken and Anderson to raise money, activities are very limited. Staff funding and membership losses have combined to weaken the association. The Columbia chapter is virtually inactive, with little prospect for revival. Still, the OSHA meetings to be held at the State House in October may provide some organizing impetus and help focus members' energies as they have in other BLA states. And the West Point-Pepperell settlements may generate some spark as well. ■

*Richard Guarasci teaches political science at St. Lawrence University. Gary Peck is a post-doctoral fellow in the sociology department at the University of Chicago.*

# LOVE ROCK & ROLL? GET SERIOUS!

**W**Dave Marsh...a founding father of Creem, associate editor of *Rolling Stone*...has spent fifteen years zealously defending and censoring rock & roll. Taking the fan's part, championing rock's working-class heroes, he has, perhaps more than any other critic, promoted the idea that at its finest, rock & roll is the public voice of the have-nots....Now he is at his best with *ROCK & ROLL CONFIDENTIAL*, an 8-page monthly newsletter....*ROCK & ROLL CONFIDENTIAL* crusades against the corporate and reactionary forces eating away at rock. Treating rock fans as a powerful constituency, written with Marsh's usual flair for the inflammatory, crammed with juicy statements and statistics, RRC makes the most convincing case yet for rock as a potent political educator....RRC accepts no advertising and has no pictures...It can't be mistaken for an entertainment mag, though it's far more entertaining--and hip and funny--than *Rolling Stone*. //

--Joyce Millman, *Boston Phoenix*,  
July 26, 1983

Marsh doesn't do it alone. RRC's associate editor is Lee Ballinger, frequent contributor to *ITT* and the author of *In Your Face: Sports for Love and Money*. Contributors have included Greil Marcus, Ed Ward, and other readers. Hard-hitting and funny, RRC is the voice of James Watts's *Undesirable Element*. If the music still matters to you but you've been wondering where to plug in, search no more.

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In Schwabisch Gmund (left) police opted not to violently confront peace demonstrators; that was not true in Bitburg.

away. Some people wanted to extend it, but the majority decided to quit while they were ahead. Many felt that for the police to go three days in Germany without strictly enforcing the law was some sort of historic precedent, although they weren't quite sure how to capitalize on that fact.

Meanwhile, the other blockade at the U.S. Air Force base in Bitburg, near Luxembourg—probably earmarked for Cruise missiles—elicited a very different response. The American military authorities said they needed to get through, and German police obediently turned water canons on peaceful demonstrators, then threatened them with snarling police dogs. A couple of people were bitten. Hearing of the violence in Bitburg, several "promis" and an American solidarity contingent—including Philip Berri-gan, Daniel Ellsberg and several members of the War Resisters League—rushed to Bitburg in time to get roughed up and arrested.

Why the difference in treatment? Daniel Ellsberg suggested that it was "criminal in Germany to demonstrate against nuclear weapons with less than 100 'prominents'." Ellsberg insisted the police had been guilty of criminal assault in using unnecessary violence against peaceful traffic violators. Green Party Bundestag member Roland Vogt pointed out that

Diana Johnstone

By Diana Johnstone

B O N N

**T**HE GERMAN PEACE MOVEMENT has begun a busy autumn of protest actions that will peak during the third week in October, in a last-minute attempt to stop deployment of American Pershing II and Cruise nuclear missiles on German soil at the end of the year.

The protest season got underway on September 1 with three day long symbolic blockades of two American military bases scheduled to receive some of the new missiles. The most highly reported was the blockade of the U.S. Army field artillery base tucked between the Mutlangen suburban school and a heavily wooded hillside overlooking the pretty and prosperous old silversmiths' town of Schwabisch Gmund in southern Germany, east of Stuttgart.

Schwabisch Gmund looks like its name sounds: cozy and adorable with its steep-roofed houses, meticulous flower gardens, fountains and painted madonnas—all nestled between deeply forested hills. It is a forest of Christmas trees. Yet right there, hidden among the Christmas trees, the U.S. Army is getting ready to install the Pershing II missiles. This will be the most accurate nuclear first-strike weapon made yet (once it works), 10 times more accurate than the Soviet SS-20—the weapon theoretically able to "decapitate" the Soviet Union by knocking out Soviet command and control centers with its "earth penetrator" warheads that are able to seek and destroy underground bunkers.

The American base looks reassuringly tacky and insignificant. But it is enough to ensure, once equipped with Pershing II missiles, that Schwabisch Gmund would be "taken out" in the first minutes of a nuclear war. Some local people assert that they are lucky: they will not be among the part of the German population that lives to "envy the dead" as they agonize under the effects of radiation and the knowledge that after their slow deaths there will be nothing left of the German nation.

On Hiroshima day, August 6, a peace camp was set up in a field near the residential suburb of Mutlangen for training in non-violent civil disobedience in preparation for the blockade. Since the German police do not usually fool around with obstacles to "law and order," there was fear of violent repression combined with efforts to accuse the blockaders of instigating "violence" in an attempt to

isolate them and criminalize the peace movement. To prevent this, celebrities were mobilized to join the action. The idea was that their presence would either inhibit police violence, or, at the very least, attract enough media attention to let the public know that the protesters were truly non-violent.

About 100 prominent persons—soon nicknamed the "prominents" or "promis" and headed by writers Heinrich Boll and Gunther Grass—answered the call and milled around for three days in the good-natured and colorful crowd blocking the two entrances to the Mutlangen camp. Among the signs pinned to the barbed wire was one in English, telling American soldiers to "get rid of your

arms and we will welcome you back."

Demonstrators hoped to explain their viewpoint to American service men, but U.S. soldiers were kept out of sight. Only German policeman were seen patrolling the base. But later at the rally in Schwabisch Gmund, there was long applause when a speaker reported that a black American soldier had told a group of protesters: "Keep it up. Most of us in the States agree with you."

The blockaders had braced themselves to submit to arrest, perhaps to violence. Nothing happened. American military and German police authorities decided to defuse the situation. Saying they didn't need to get in and out of the base just then, they waited for the blockade to go

Rheinland Pfalz, the state where Bitburg is located, is the poorest in West Germany (it was the French zone of occupied Germany) and has a particularly "colonial" government. "Rheinland Pfalz is a NATO aircraft carrier," he said.

What alarmed some movement leaders was that reports of "violence" at Bitburg gave part of the public the impression that the protesters must have started it, whereas in fact they were as non-violent as at Mutlangen. Because it expresses a majority, not a minority position, the movement worries about a possible image of violence. It expects the government to use violence—or threats of violence, or accusations of violence—to try to undermine

*Continued on page 11*



Diana Johnstone

## Peace leader talks of U.S. visit

Americans have not yet understood the broad, deep-rooted strength of the German peace movement, one of its leaders, Eva Quistorp, said in an interview on her return from a trip to the U.S.

Quistorp was invited to the U.S. to take part in the August 27 march on Washington. The event meant a lot to her for its historic significance in carrying on the tradition of Martin Luther King Jr., especially at a time when his example of non-violent civil disobedience is being widely followed in Ger-

many. Quistorp, a Protestant pastor's daughter, who began her political activism in the German Socialist Students association (SDS) that gave a new post-war birth to the left in Germany in the '60s, sees in both the American black civil rights movement and the German peace movement "the good side of Protestant culture" coming out.

The August 27 march was built by a multi-issue coalition that she felt was somewhat similar to the "coalition of conscience" represented by the German peace movement. But she was frankly disappointed by her contacts with American peace movement leaders, who did not seem to share her concern for building a broad and powerful coalition movement both at home and internationally.

Quistorp is a member of the national Coordination Committee for the autumn actions against deployment of Pershing II and Cruise missiles in the German Federal Republic. On the Coordinating Committee, she represents Women for Peace, one of 24 organizations that have been brought into the ever-growing coalition by an arduous process of learning to overcome differences in the search for common ground.

American peace leaders seemed to be interested only in Green Party leader

Petra Kelly. They did not realize that the movement cannot be reduced to a single celebrity, or even to the Greens, said Quistorp, who is also a Green and may be a Green Party candidate in the next European Parliamentary elections. The Green Party itself is the result of a 15-year process of political construction, she stressed. The American peace leaders she met seemed to want quick and easy solutions.

Because of the media fixation on Kelly, Americans seeking contact with the German peace movement all address themselves to the Greens' "superstar" instead of the movement's democratically selected Coordinating Committee. Shortly after my interview with Quistorp, in fact, I happened to overhear Petra Kelly, haggard and on the brink of exhaustion, complaining that she and her small underpaid staff were unable to cope with the mountains of mail piling up in her office, even if they stayed up

*Continued on page 22*

The address of the German peace movement Coordinating Committee for Autumn 1983 action is:

Koordinationsburo "Herbst '83"  
Estermannstrasse 179  
5300 Bonn 1, Federal Republic of Germany  
Telephone: 49/228/678231



# OSHA

Continued from page 7  
until it's made plain that they're not going to be able to."

Dr. Leonard Vance, OSHA's director of Health Standards, wasn't with the agency when the EDB decision was made. But he emphatically denies that OSHA has any policy of refusing to issue emergency standards.

"During the time I've been here (17 months), no emergency temporary standard has been issued. But an analysis has been made of the court criteria for issuance of an emergency standard in each case." Vance says the problem with emergency temporary standards is that they are frequently—and successfully—challenged in the courts.

"Four of the five OSHA emergency temporary standards that have been challenged have been overturned," he says. "The issuance of emergency temporary standard consumes substantial quantities of time, effort and money, only to be struck down. The issuance of an emergency standard in the absence of a very strong and compelling case is fraught with a waste of agency effort and time."

Vance's numbers are accurate, although misleading. Many of the emergency standards regulate more than one substance. According to Auchter's own testimony before a congressional sub-

committee last spring, OSHA has issued emergency standards covering 31 substances since it was created a decade ago. The standards covering 15 of those were struck down by the courts.

And in a memo prepared during the time OSHA was deliberating whether to issue an emergency standard for EDB, one of the agency's lawyers seems to have suggested the case was worth pursuing. Associate solicitor Frank White wrote, "We can show that EDB poses a grave danger to exposed employees." Later, he added, "It should not be difficult to establish that an emergency situation exists."

In his conclusion, White stated that the agency could easily defend itself against any lawsuits by the unions should OSHA decide not to issue the regulation. But he also noted, "On the other hand, we feel that respectable arguments could be made in support of the emergency temporary standard, and that we would have a reasonably good chance of success before a sympathetic forum."

Auchter said he refused to issue an emergency standard because OSHA didn't have evidence of actual worker exposure to back it up. And he told Miller's hearing last week that the evidence he now has indicates "there is no need for an emergency standard."

Auchter said his statement is supported by OSHA and NIOSH studies that show no workers are being exposed to more than three parts per million, and most are being exposed to amounts below .1. But NIOSH's Millar told the subcommittee

that even at .065 parts per million, about 185 of every 1000 workers would die from cancer.

And the subcommittee heard testimony indicating workers in grain mills have been exposed to much higher levels. Don Bowman, president of the grain miller's union in California, told the hearing that his workers frequently could smell EDB after the mill was fumigated. That means they were breathing in at least 10 parts per million.

Dave Smith, who works in a Minneapolis flour mill, nearly died from EDB exposure. While fumigating some grain, Smith got a small amount of the chemical on his hands. Because the applicator wasn't working properly, he also spilled some on his pants. Within hours he was in a hospital, his body completely numb. His pulse rate dropped to 29 per minute—72 is normal—and for five days doctors didn't know if he would survive.

But OSHA—charged by Congress with protecting worker health and safety—has decided to ignore the serious threat to workers' lives rather than risk having to defend an emergency standard in court.

## Foot dragging.

Its unwillingness to issue emergency standards isn't the only complaint against OSHA. It's been about a year and a half since OSHA rejected the emergency standard and issued an "advance notice of proposed rulemaking," the first step toward issuing a new standard. That proposed rule isn't due out until next May, and even if it is issued on

time, it will probably be the end of 1984 at the earliest that a final standard is issued.

Nor are the criticisms of OSHA limited to charges that it's too slow to come out with stronger regulations for substances that already have standards, when new scientific evidence shows those existing standards are too weak. When President Reagan appointed Auchter, OSHA staffers were working on a generic cancer policy. That policy would have set up specific guidelines so both industry and workers would know what tests a chemical would have to meet before declared a carcinogen in need of regulation. At the same time, it would make it easier for OSHA scientists to get those regulations out.

"Instead of running from crisis to crisis," Dr. Alexander explains, "we were trying to identify the universe of compounds we ought to be concerned about. We couldn't work on 140 animal carcinogens at once, but we could create a priority system."

A key part of that system was the cancer candidate list—nearly 100 substances that various studies had indicated were likely carcinogens. But the new administration decided not to enact the policy. Not one of those suspected carcinogens has been regulated.

"It's still on the books," Alexander points out. "But the current administration chooses not to enforce it."

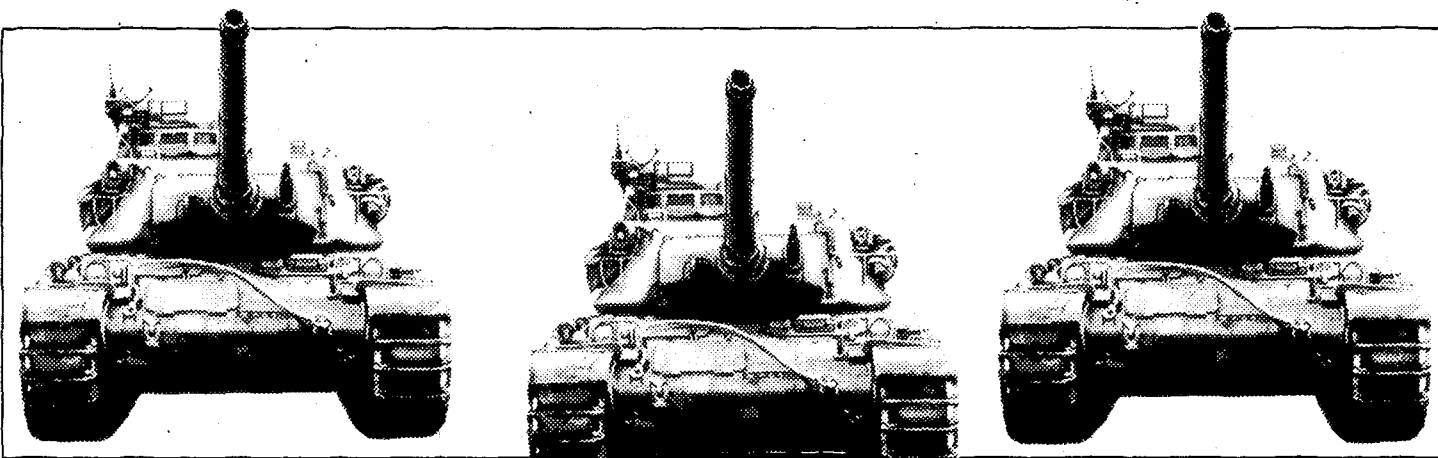
Some critics, both inside and outside the agency, acknowledge that the fact OSHA is working on the asbestos, EDB and several other standards, no matter how slowly, is a giant step forward. There are differing opinions, however, on what spurred that action.

Auchter told a congressional hearing on OSHA's budget last spring: "The health standards activity in OSHA from 1971 to 1980 shows 24 subjects addressed in final rules. We are going to issue 15 final health standards in a four-year period, January 1981 to January 1985. That is a record anybody could and should be proud of."

But one congressional staffer noted that until Auchter was called before a series of hostile congressional hearings earlier this year, every rule OSHA had issued only weakened existing standards. Many of the proposals that have since come out strengthen standards. Yet most of those were developed in response to threatened or actual lawsuits. The staffer pointed out that Auchter also seemed to have a change of heart after EPA administrator Anne Gorsuch and her top aides were all forced out of their jobs following the scandalous revelations of their handling of environmental issues.

"Auchter is an astute political animal," the staffer concluded. "He doesn't want to be Gorsuched."

Harvy Lipman is a writer/producer for Cable News Network.



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## MEXICO

# Corruption emerges as big issue in provincial election



Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid's Institutional Revolutionary Party is used to winning elections with pork-barrel politics—or stealing them if they don't win.

By Marjorie Miller

MEXICALI, MEXICO

**W**HEN MIGUEL DE LA MADRID assumed the presidency of this nearly bankrupt country last year, it was with the promise of a "moral renovation" of government and politics. De la Madrid took the helm of a government that centralizes power at the top, and a party run like a Richard Daley political machine with the added zeal of revolutionary rhetoric. His Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has run Mexico for half a century, is used to winning elections with pork barrel politics—or stealing them if they don't win.

The PRI machine worked pretty well as long as the country was prospering. But in the last one-and-a-half years, as the economy has crumbled, the PRI's politics have not been as widely embraced and the PRI has felt the need to open pressure valves against mounting opposition.

Moral renovation has become the government's major escape valve. The president has rallied against corruption and has promised that election results will be respected.

Ironically, the valves that were opened primarily to placate the left have been used more to the advantage of the right. Since de la Madrid took up his anti-corruption crusade, the PRI has lost about a dozen elections for mayor, most of them to the conservative National Action Party (PAN).

The PAN holds the mayorships of four state capitals and of the country's fifth largest city, Ciudad Juarez, across the border from El Paso. Another conservative party, the Mexican Democratic Party, holds a fifth state capital.

The rightist victories do not represent a significant shift in power in the Mexican political system, but they are an important symbol that voters are dissatisfied with the government, with the ailing economy and perhaps even with the

country's virtual one-party system. So this month, it was with great national interest that the elections for governor and mayor of four cities were held here in Baja California. Some 30 national journalists flew up from Mexico City to observe an election that normally would have received little notice.

Both the PRI and the PAN painted the state race in broad national strokes. In an unprecedented move, the PRI brought President de la Madrid and the national party chairman in to campaign for PRI candidates. With a flourish, the PRI portrayed the race as an effort to stop the gains of "reactionaries" in the country. On the other side, the PAN held the elections up as the true test of the president's moral renovation.

Four leftist parties, including the largest, the Mexican Unified Socialist Party (PSUM), also ran candidates, but had no hope of winning. The PSUM said it hoped to increase its percentage of the vote and to stave off a bi-polarization of Mexican politics into a U.S.-style election system.

While it was clear from the beginning

the PRI would win the governorship—they haven't ever lost one—and the cities of Tecate and Tijuana, it was not so clear who would win the port city of Ensenada and the big plum—the capital of Mexicali.

In Ensenada, a popular politician who had been the city's mayor in 1954, left the PRI this year to run on the ticket of the nominally leftist Socialist Worker's Party (PST). He had wanted to be the PRI's candidate again, but when the party picked a little-known bureaucrat over him, he broke ranks.

In Mexicali, the PAN launched a strong candidate, campaigning against PRI-government corruption and the ill economy, which has hit the dollar-dependent border area particularly hard. They pointed to the other states as proof that the PRI could be beaten.

The PRI in Mexicali ran a candidate who already served as mayor from 1977-80—a fact that irritated many voters who said the party should give someone else a chance. In the back of many voters' minds was the election of 1968, when the PAN apparently won the mayorships of

Tijuana and Mexicali, but never gained power. On election day that year, when it became clear the PAN was winning, pistol-wielding civilians robbed about half the ballot boxes from voting sites. The PAN charged the PRI government with stealing the elections and the government denied it. The elections were annulled, the governor appointed city councils to run the cities and for two years Mexicali and Tijuana had no mayors.

For most of the three-month campaign this year, it looked as if things would be different. Both parties ran vigorous campaigns. But just two weeks before the September 4 election, the State Electoral Commission announced election changes that the PAN and three other opposition parties said were illegal and would allow the PRI government to engage in fraud.

At the end of election day, the PAN claimed victory in Mexicali. The PRI immediately claimed victory in the governorship and all four cities, including Mexicali. Yet official results are not released by the electoral commission for a week after the election.

The PAN held demonstrations to "defend the vote" in Mexicali, and PRI support groups took out ads in local newspapers saying they would not allow fraud. On September 11, the electoral commission announced the official results: the leftist PST had, in fact, won Ensenada, but the PRI claimed Mexicali. The commission's word is law—although the PAN says it is invalid since the government commission is controlled by the PRI.

The PAN continues to insist it won the city—its fifth state capital. The PRI says this time the ruling party won cleanly and fairly, with a good campaign.

Observers may never really be sure who won, but what may be more important is that the PAN is managing to convince the public that they won and the PRI cheated. The perception that the PAN won may, in the long run, be more significant than reality if it serves to deface the president's moral renovation and to feed future PAN successes in other state elections.

Marjorie Miller is a reporter in San Diego, Calif.

Valves opened to placate the left have worked to help the right. Since the start of de la Madrid's anti-corruption campaign, the PRI has lost 12 elections, mainly to conservatives.

## Germany

Continued from page 9

its support and frighten citizens away from demonstrations.

A July poll showed more than 75 percent of West Germans wanted missile deployment postponed to allow further negotiations if no Soviet-American agreement is reached by the end of the year. An August poll showed that 47 percent of Germans consider the NATO nuclear missiles a "threat," compared to 25 percent who consider them a protection.

All summer long, while the peace movement trained for non-violence, the government talked violence. On the pretext of preventing violence, Interior Minister Friedrich Zimmermann, the coalition cabinet's most right-wing member, prepared to revise the demonstration law

so as to ban "disguises" and "passive arms" (both loosely defined) and make anybody taking part in a demonstration liable to criminal prosecution for any violence that might break out unless he or she could prove having actively tried to stop the violence. This law would obviously smooth a path for the government, or even more likely, for right-wing groups to send provocateurs into any peaceful demonstration to provide a pretext to arrest everybody.

A sign that the Americans and their most cooperative German allies seek to incite violent incidents was Vice-President George Bush's recent trip to Krefeld. It had all the earmarks of provocation. Krefeld is where the first petition against the missiles, the Krefeld Appeal, was launched in November 1980. Before arriving, Bush's spokesmen announced he would launch some sort of opposing "Krefeld Appeal."

Ostensibly, he came to celebrate the

300th anniversary of the first German immigration to America. But he ignored the fact that the people who left Krefeld were Quaker pacifists. Instead, Bush said they had gone to America for "freedom" and that we must defend that "freedom."

Many Germans were offended, and it is not surprising that while a large peaceful protest demonstration was being held in another part of town, a few unorganized youths got into skirmishes with police. By chance, as they ran through the streets they crossed the path of Bush's motorcade, heaved some stones and made front pages of newspapers on two continents. At least one of the youths arrested by police as a leader of the Krefeld violence, 25-year-old Peter Trober, turns out to be a secret police agent sent from Berlin to Krefeld for the occasion.

At the time Bush said the stone-throwers were working for foreign masters. Maybe he knew what he was talking about.



## By Lucy R. Lippard

### Photography: Marcelo Montecino

Central America now exercises the same influence on American foreign policy as the full moon does on werewolves.

—Dr. Wayne Smith  
former U.S. diplomat in Cuba

**O**N JULY 19 THE U.S. DELEGATION to Nicaragua's "Conference on Central America" sat in a sunny, banner-bedecked field in Leon. We listened to cheering crowds celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Sandinista revolution and greet junta coordinator Daniel Ortega's six-point offer to negotiate in Central America. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, a right-wing seminar met in Washington to discuss the threat of Sandinista survival, and Ronald Reagan sent gunboats steaming toward the Caribbean for a spate of military maneuvers unparalleled since Vietnam.

The stated goals of this show of force and of the invasion of Nicaragua by U.S.-backed *contras* is, in Reagan's words, "to restore the true revolution" and to protect "the budding democracy in El Salvador." The maneuvers were not, as much of the media implied, the source of Ortega's *simultaneous* offers to negotiate (which, in fact, began in February 1982, but were ignored by the Reagan administration). And now it turns out that full maneuvers have been postponed until November because the U.S. has neither the troops nor the funds to go so far so fast. The fact that it has scant congressional and public approval apparently means little. But the delay means the administration has to settle

## Artists call

Among the activities we discussed with the ASTC for our return were: encouraging small groups to visit Nicaragua to see for themselves; organizing volunteer brigades who would work and teach there; conferences, panels, film festivals, home slide shows, our own literacy campaign (I'd recommend beginning with Penny Lernoux's *Cry of the People*, Stephen Schlesinger's and Stephen Kinzer's *Bitter Fruit*, and Margaret Randall's *Sandino's Daughters*), and art exhibitions—particularly close to my heart because we've been working since spring on a nationwide mobilization for January—"ARTISTS CALL Against U.S. Intervention in Central America"—to consist of shows and cultural events including Central American, local progressive and mainstream artists in support (financial, political and aesthetic) of El Salvador and Nicaragua. For further information: ARTISTS CALL, 339 Lafayette St., NYC 10012; service (212) 242-3900.



for dangerous games of chicken at sea in the interim.

We have been ambiguously assured by Secretary of State George Shultz that "our forces will defend themselves but they will withdraw if attacked" (*New York Times*, Aug. 5). You'll also be glad to hear that the Central American hoopla will "cost the taxpayers nothing extra" because other (presumably unnecessary) campaigns—for which we are paying—will be cancelled. As Sandinista leader Tomas Borge said on July 4 in *Barricada* (the official government newspaper), "A comedy is being staged in order to justify a tragedy."

The Conference on Central America was sponsored by the Sandinista Association of Cultural Workers (ASTC) with the intention of combatting the mis/disinformation fed North Americans. Some 230 people attended, mostly from the U.S. and Canada, but also from Latin nations. We were writers, artists, scholars, activists, doctors, lawyers, labor organizers, etc.—most of whom had been involved at home in solidarity work with Nicaragua. The U.S. delegation was organized by the Office of the Americas in Los Angeles.

The emphasis was overtly on educating us, and the conference format was rigorous. We got a dose of North American history not taught in the U.S.—the dismal tale of imperialism, intervention and corporate greed that I thought I knew already, but didn't. The details are devastating, and it was a curious experience to absorb them from a series of youthful and intense Sandinista leaders, usually dressed in army green, often packing pistols, many of whom were poets or intellectuals in their own right. The environment in which we met provided another element of disorientation: lush tropical gardens and glass walls, huge swimming pool and handsome conference hall—Somoza's old country club.

"Culture" was broadly interpreted by the Nicaraguans to include all forms of communication and ideological confrontation, from the arts themselves to the mass media to CIA manipulation of religious cults, opposition newspapers and high-powered radio broadcasts from Honduras and a ship offshore.

Sergio Ramirez, a novelist and non-military member of the top three-man junta (his Op-Ed contribution to the *New York Times*, July 26 should be required reading) gave a neat refutation of the three major criticisms leveled by the Reagan administration against the Sandinistas:

- Exporting the revolution: "How can we prevent the news from spreading to Honduras that in Nicaragua farmers get land, health care, literacy...? Revolutions have no borders; the U.S. exported its revolution to Latin America via Bolivar."

- Betraying the revolution: "We made no promises to the U.S., but to the Nicaraguan people. The U.S. betrayed its own revolution very early through expansionism in Mexico and California."

- The revolution is "totalitarian": "The FSLN's three basic principles are: pluralism, a mixed economy and non-alignment.... We want an everyday democracy, not one that happens only every four years. We want a leadership that's not just a soap or a deodorant...the kind Madison planned when he wrote the U.S. Constitution.... But we are no longer a satellite of the U.S. and are seeking our own model. We aspire to full justice and independence."

A prime red herring held before the uninformed American public's nose is the fact that the Sandinistas have not yet held "popular elections," which are planned for 1985—"if we are left alone." The Nicaraguans point out that "an election right after the triumph would have swept away all minorities and other parties"; and that it wasn't until 1800 that the successful American revolutionaries held a two-party election. (It has been argued that before 1800, the individual states held popular elections; the 32 mass organizations in the Nicaraguan State Council also elect their representatives.)

Seven political parties currently participate in the Nicaraguan government. Four are members of the Popular Front and three are in the opposition. The Sandinistas control six of the 12 seats. The three parties that do not participate are the Communist Party (represented only as a trade union), a Maoist party and a new Social Democratic Party not yet accredited. All parties are being urged to

develop their platforms for 1985. A national commission has traveled internationally to study different electoral structures as basis for a process that will "reflect our reality."

The mass organizations in the State Council include trade unions, women, youth and agricultural workers among others. A "Superior Council of Private Enterprise" represents the private sector, which still controls more than 60 percent of the land and some 75 percent of the industry. One of the junta, Rafael Cordoba Rivas, is a member of the Democratic Conservative Party. As William Sloane Coffin pointed out (*New York Times*, July 31), "How 'Marxist-Leninist' is a country where these things are true, where four well-known Catholic priests and no Communists serve in the cabinet? ...To be sure, the banks in Nicaragua have been nationalized, but so too have those in Mexico, as well as the Mexican oil industry. Yet the president never refers to 'Marxist-Leninist' Mexico."

Actually, the Sandinistas are caught in a precarious spot where they cannot afford to run the country without the support of the private sector while the people are demanding further nationalization, to which they accede wherever possible.

No se venden. Jamas! insists the San-

# N



Sandinista anthem ("We are not for sale. Ever!"). Foreign Minister, Catholic priest and recent CIA assassination target Miguel D'Escoto amplified Sandinista determination for self-determination in relaxed English. "When the revolution appened, the Carter administration tried to put forward another junta so the who would have to negotiate and the U.S. could control things. But they couldn't find the right kind of lackeys (not that we're devoid of them yet).

"Then they told the junta they'd lend lots of money toward reconstruction in return for a watered-down junta—Somoism without Somoza.' Then they realized we couldn't be bought so they tried threats and intimidation.... Reagan, when he came in, immediately cut off all aid and pressured Europe to withhold loans so Nicaragua would be isolated. They spent \$19.5 million on the *contras* on the pretext of stopping arms traffic." Let even the *New York Times* reported July 31 that "the flow of military supplies to Salvadoran rebels from outside the country has been only a trickle for many months."

"War has not been declared on Nicaragua, but it is being waged," said D'Escoto. "We have a right to pursue onto Honduran territory but we can't use our legitimate defenses because if we did, we'd fall into their trap and allow Reagan to open a huge campaign against 'the expansionist Sandinist revolution.'"

This seems to be happening anyway, aided and abetted by the smokescreen of an evasive, confusing and confused media response. Sergio Ramirez, in reply to a question about why Nicaragua did not send arms to the Salvadoran guerrillas, reiterated this point: "We believe the guerrilla struggle is just and moral, but if the U.S. could just once *prove* we were sending arms, they'd have the pretext they're looking for.... And it's nothing to do with the East-West struggle. It goes back much further, to the 19th century, when the Soviet Union didn't exist." When asked if Nicaragua wasn't being pushed toward the East, D'Escoto replied, "No. You insure independence by diversifying your dependence."

Reagan's shift of blame for the Central American mess from El Salvador to Nicaragua is as sad as it is absurd. No nation has more reason to work for peace. It has been laid waste by earthquake, corruption, repression, revolution, Somoza's bombing of "his own" cities and now a drought. In addition, the U.S. economic blockade has effectively been stepped up, consisting, among other things, of refusal to sell wheat to Nicaragua, of cutting by 89 percent Nicaragua's sugar sales to the U.S. and millions of dollars lost in crucial international loans.

In Managua, there were long lines for rationed gas and bread. (Though corn tortillas were available, the corn crop has suffered from drought and thus corn-fed meat, too, is scarce.) On July 19, Ortega asked his people to bear with it: "There can be a shortage of Chiclets, but not of rice, beans or oil."

As Omar Cabezas of the Ministry of the Interior told us, "We're not afraid of losing power; the people are the power. But a war now in Nicaragua would have a terrible cost." And William Ramirez, minister of Integration of the Atlantic Coast, said bitterly, "How can we still be imagined as a threat to the U.S. when there's so little left to us?"

The Atlantic Coast, and the Sandinistas' problems with its 100,000 Miskitos, 2,000 Sumos, 200 Ramas and 15,000-20,000 black, English-speaking *criollos*, is responsible for Nicaragua's worst foreign press. As far as the Indians are concerned this is "just another change in government." William Ramirez frankly admitted that the Sandinistas did not handle the situation well: "Our great mistake was not knowing the history, the customs of the peoples on the coast.... We carried out no political work with them, so they had no part in the triumph. Somoza kept the Atlantic Coast isolated so he could freely carry out his treacheries. It was a total mystery.... After the revolution, we couldn't find the right ways to relate the interests of the indigenous peoples to ours....

"Yet under Somoza, the Miskitos were ashamed of their language, 80 percent of

the Indians had tuberculosis, there was no electricity, no schools or teachers, they had never seen ice...the forests had been devastated for lumber, gold and silver were taken out by the multinationals, United Fruit took over hundreds of acres, which, yesterday [July 17], we gave back to the Miskitos. The history of the Atlantic Coast is not yet incorporated into ours. We are in a process of integration that will take years."

One of our group who went to the still almost inaccessible east coast after the conference confirmed the fact that it was indeed "like a different country." Integration will be a battle against the odds of cultural fragmentation and CIA and *contra* destabilization.

We went to the Honduran border war zone—by a grueling bus trip through the night, presumably to avoid *contra* ambushes like that of May 20, when two Nicaraguan soldiers died defending a group of journalists. (In early June, a small U.S. cultural delegation was also caught in a *contra* attack.)

We saw a lot of bullet holes, nervous, armed civilians and soldiers hiding in the cornfields as we passed. Yet the mass media implies that the Honduran hostilities have been trumped up by the Sandinistas to keep their revolution alive—patently absurd, given the tragedy of 600 civilian and military deaths, kidnapping and torture of peasants and youthful educators, murders of foreign doctors and an estimated \$70 million in damages resulting from the U.S.-backed *contras*' invasions into Nicaragua.

An ABC news team in Jalapa reported when we were there that the North American visitors were shown no evidence of war but were treated to a show of military strength. (The report was monitored in New York at the request of a writer in our group who is doing a detailed analysis of media distortion.) The "show of strength" was an award ceremony for frontline troops held in a cow pasture-soccer field in Jalapa, which recalled nothing so much as a very small town fair for the 4th of July, though with more ominous overtones.

Journalists (top) receiving a tour of the area by a Sandinista soldier. Below: a group of Sandinista soldiers.



A temporary platform was set up in the field (local mothers of the dead in the back row, military hierarchy in the front) behind which a band played loudly. Children and foreigners with cameras scurried chaotically through the flag drills and formalities, tolerated good naturedly by the forces, who were not always standing exactly at attention (one soldier snapped his fingers to the martial music throughout the proceedings). There were perhaps 200 men and women—brown-uniformed militia and green-camouflaged border patrols—marching in ragged but proud formations, their red and black and blue and white flags blowing against the green, partly cultivated hills, surrounding adobe village and the dark, clouding sky.

*They were all so young.* The Sandinista revolution was won by "the kids." (Ortega himself is 35.) Seven-year-olds did clandestine work and were executed for it. Some of the teenagers in today's mass organizations are veterans. And they are still dying under fire—more than 100 members killed on the border since January.

(Jalapa vignettes: I picked up a six-year-old informant named Bolivar, who unerringly read the text on my conference card; my own rather more privileged kid couldn't read at that age.... A young American woman was seated in the pasture, wearing a self-consciously torn T-shirt and jeans; next to her a barefoot little girl in a muddy, tattered party dress frowned intently at the foreigner's rags.)

We also went to a communal meeting in a converted barn where we heard from Jalapa's governor and priest—plain people, speaking plainly. Children, again, chased each other around the hall; there was some music, but it was a solemn moment, emphasized by the names of the dead inscribed randomly on the walls in chalk, ink, or on paper plaques. The governor told us "Jalapa is a center of fire and bullets.... We can only offer you our feelings." Rosario Murillo, head of the

*Continued on page 22*

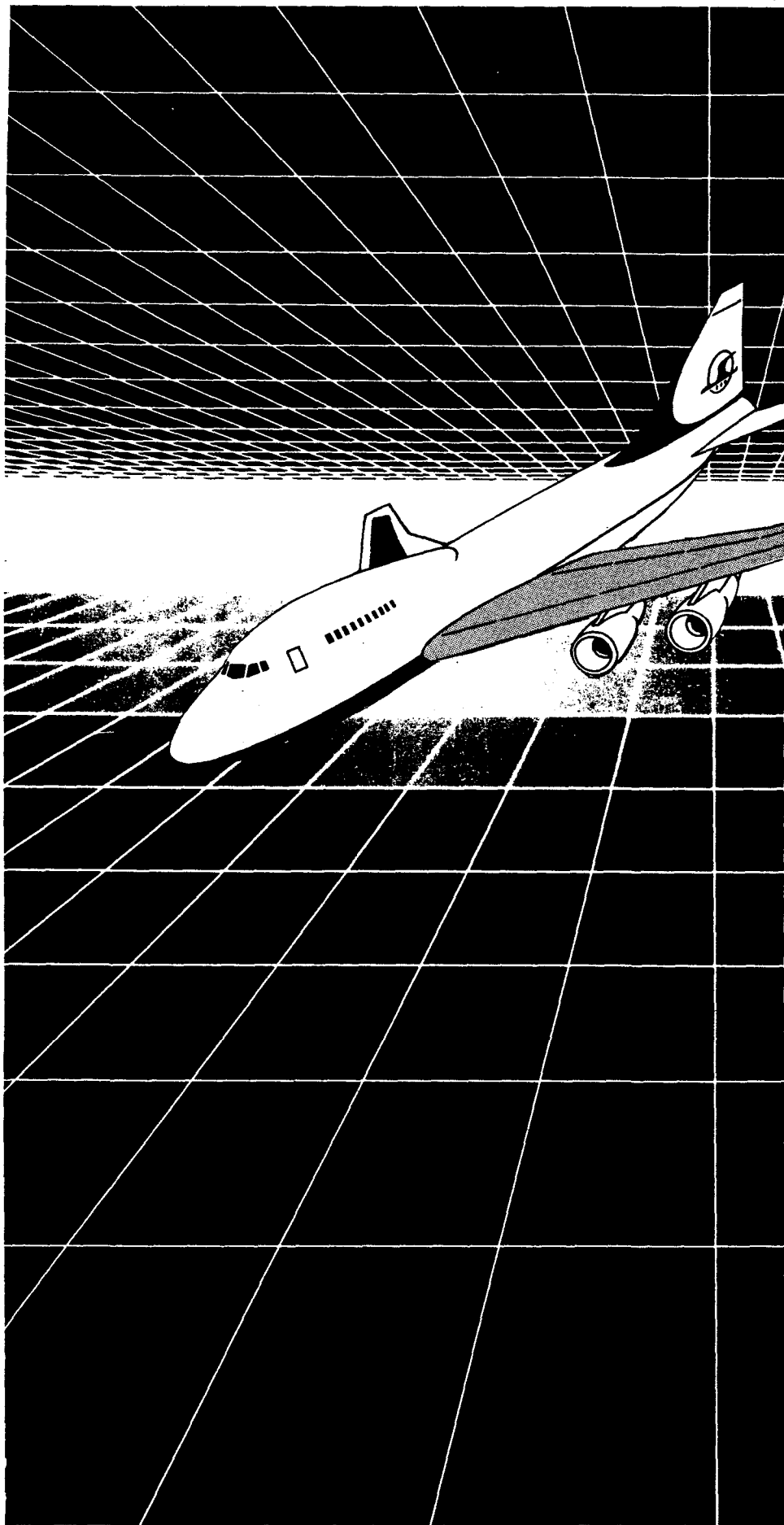
# The other Caragua

Notes on a nation that  
the media has panned.





# EDITORIAL



## Reagan jumps on downed flight 007 with both feet

Early in the morning of September 1, over a part of Soviet territory so sensitive that Federal Aviation Administration maps carry the warning "Aircraft infringing upon [this] nonfree territory may be fired upon without warning," a Soviet SU15 interceptor plane shot down a Korean Airline 747 jumbo jet carrying 269 passengers and crew members.

In Washington, President Ronald Reagan, speaking, he said, for the "civilized world," denounced the "Korean Airline massacre" as "an act of barbarism." Isn't it time, he asked, "for us to see the Soviet leaders as they really are, rather than as we would like them to be?" And, answering his own question, he went on to note that "I was charged with being too harsh in my language," but the Soviets' "recent behavior"

should "dispel any lingering doubt about what kind of regime we're dealing with and what our responsibilities are as trustees of freedom and peace."

Meanwhile, in Moscow, Soviet leaders were clearly disoriented. They had a problem on their hands, but they seemed, initially, not to understand the extent or seriousness of it. It wasn't until September 5 that they acknowledged, and then only implicitly, the shooting down of the 747, which they said had been confused by the Soviet command with an RC-135 American radar reconnaissance plane.

Once President Reagan admitted that an RC-135 had been in the vicinity of the 747 as it veered off course and into Soviet airspace, a Soviet official accused the Reagan administration of a Nazi-like sacrifice of civilians aboard a plane that was

being used for spying. Still, in this battle of words, the Soviets, who had done the shooting, were clearly on the defensive.

### The Soviets' story.

The Soviet side of the story was told in Moscow at an unprecedented news conference at which the chief of the Soviet General Staff, Marshal Nikolai V. Ogarkov, laid out his case and responded to spontaneous questions from journalists. He argued that the plane must have been on a spying mission, because the electronic equipment on the plane and the ground-tracking devices were too well developed for an accidental deviation like that of flight 007 without detection by American or Japanese controllers.

He also charged that the RC-135 operated for two hours in the vicinity of the 747, thus causing confusion among Soviet defense forces. And finally, he insisted that all attempts were made to warn off the intruding plane, and that only after it ignored all warnings—including the firing of 120 rounds of tracer shells in four bursts—and after the plane was already over Soviet bases for more than an hour (during which it could have been shot down by land-based missiles at any time), was its flight "cut short" by an airborne heat-seeking rocket.

Beyond all of Reagan's rhetoric, much of the Soviet side of the story has gradually been confirmed by the U.S., also in an apparently dilatory manner. First, the reason for the 747's straying from its normal flight plan remains unexplained. The plane's triply redundant inertial guidance system is said by all experts to be virtually foolproof. Some have speculated that an error may have been made in setting its coordinates at the beginning of 007's flight out of Anchorage, but even if this had happened, the error should have been caught at any one of several checkpoints where a review of flight paths is mandatory.

Beyond that, administration officials have insisted that there could be no confusion with the RC-135 by the Russians because an RC-135 (a military version of the Boeing 707) is much smaller than the 747. And they also initially insisted that no attempt was made to warn the plane by firing tracer shots, an assertion they tried to prove by playing tapes of the Soviet interceptor's radio transmission at the United Nations.

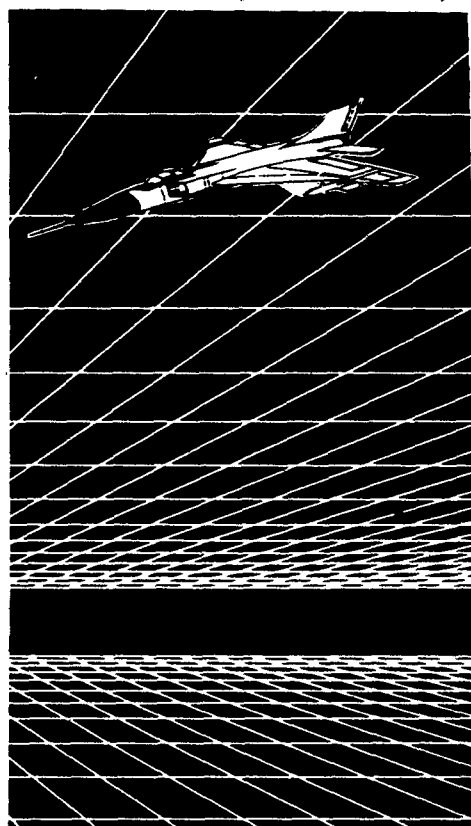
But as both the *New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune* have pointed out—although not very prominently—it is easy to confuse a 747 for an RC-135, both of which are Boeing planes of similar configuration. Both planes have four engines, two under each wing, and a similar tail, the *Tribune* reported, and "on a dark night and viewed from behind, said one expert, the two planes look very similar." As for size, both papers agreed, in the *Times*' words, that "specialists suggest it is difficult to gauge a plane's size at night at a distance of two kilometers."

On the question of the warning shots, after insisting the Soviets were lying, as attested in the tapes, the State Department came up with a revised transcript on September 11 that seemed to confirm Marshall Ogarkov's assertion that warning shots were fired six minutes before the plane was shot down.

### Revealing reactions.

From all of this it is impossible to say with any certainty whether the Soviets knew what kind of plane they were shooting down or whether the U.S. was involved in the 747's deviation from its normal flight path. But it is possible to say something about both the Soviet and American reactions to the incident.

First, the Soviet Union, which in shooting down a civilian aircraft had nothing to gain and everything to lose, reacted in the worst possible way. It could and should have expressed dismay and deep regret about killing the 269 persons on board 007 as soon as it discovered it had



done so. Instead, it stalled, allowed the incident to assume major proportions and then seemed to say that it would do the same thing again under similar circumstances. Even assuming the worst on the part of the Koreans and the U.S., that is an unacceptable position and has rightly been condemned by people and governments all over the world.

Second, the Reagan administration's reaction was one of pure joy, disguised as great moral outrage. Reagan, at his rhetorical best, was able to use the Soviets' confusion and delays to great advantage in bolstering support for his arms buildup and for his revival of the Cold War. Soviet behavior, and Reagan's aggressive exploitation of it appear to be a godsend for Cold Warriors—if for no other reason than that it has acted to intimidate an already too timid opposition in Congress. With massive public displays of indignation over the incident, the administration is openly crowing over its enhanced chances of winning approval for the MX missile and for increased arms spending.

### Effect on Central America.

Finally, the administration appears to be making a more sinister use of this incident. In the days following the plane's downing, Reagan's war against Nicaragua has been stepped up. For the first time, the American-backed counterrevolutionaries, both from Honduras and Costa Rica, have bombed civilian targets in Managua and Corinto. The timing of these bombings, occurring as they have when American and world attention has been diverted from Central America, at least temporarily, can hardly be accidental.

That it isn't accidental was indicated a few days after the bombing incident in a White House-approved September 12 speech by Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Fred C. Ickle. Ickle said that the U.S. "must prevent consolidation of a Sandinista regime in Nicaragua that would become an arsenal for insurgency." His main target was Congress. As long as it "keeps crippling the president's military assistance program," he said, "we will have a policy shy of success.... Congress has denied the president the means to success."

Just in case Ickle's speech wasn't clear enough, a "senior administration official" spelled out the new tough line to the *New York Times*. "We've had it with the opposition in Congress," he said. "We're fed up with their interference on the one hand and their lack of support on the other." This decision to "go on the attack," as the *Times* called it, comes at a time conveniently covered by the uproar over the shooting down of 007.

If the administration did not provoke the incident, it certainly has not been slow to take advantage of it. ■



# LETTERS

*In These Times* is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

## THEY CAN'T TAKE THIS AWAY

I LIKE IN THESE TIMES AND READ IT whenever I get the chance, but sometimes an article distresses me. The feature on child raising (ITT, Sept. 7) is a case in point. In many places it takes on a glib, obnoxious tone.

My first objection is to the author's quick dismissal of inner-city day care centers as uniformly "unsafe and illegal." Although she briefly describes the interiors of the suburban chain of day cares, she does not even go that far with the urban ones.

Did she visit a single inner-city center? She makes no mention of the quality of nurturance that children get in either the suburban or the urban centers. Isn't nurturance the central issue in assessing such places? I have lived in the inner city for more than 10 years and know that much unlicensed day care is done by competent people (often experienced mothers).

Another objection is that Mary Ellen Schoonmaker gives up so easily on the notion of men as nurturers. I am a man. My daughter was born 14 years ago. From the start I took large amounts of child care responsibility—continuing for years after my marriage broke up, and—yes—I put off having a professional career in the process. I find many male nurturers of children around me, and I'll bet Schoonmaker would too if she looked. Last year my younger sister had her first child and although she is not an ardent feminist, her husband does a lot of the caring for their son. To define child care as inevitably and forever linked to the lives of women seems hopeless.

At the end of her article Schoonmaker explores ways to move forward even in these difficult times. But then she seems to give up on men and on this whole society. I know Reagan and his friends have done many terrible things. But they can never wipe away the changes in consciousness that many of us went through between 1960 and 1975. Schoonmaker seems really convinced that the reactionaries are going to win—if they haven't in fact won already. That despite all the possibilities for change she has listed in her article.

Let's not give up now. Reagan is not in there forever. We can regain lost ground by throwing out a lot of the reactionaries in the 1983 and 1984 elections.

—Jeff Kelth  
Philadelphia

## ZYGOTES VS. WOMEN

I WOULD LIKE TO RESPOND TO M.W. Perry's erroneous and repugnant statement that "Socialists...have the basis for a consistent pro-life position" (Letters, ITT, Aug. 24). Perry went on to claim that "the unborn (fertilized eggs) have the same right to life as the already born (human beings)."

As a long-time socialist-feminist, I vehemently object to such ludicrous assertions. There should not be any question on the left about the need to change the structure of the bourgeois family and institute full reproductive control. Were the left to adopt Perry's reactionary

stance on this crucial issue, there would be mass defections from its ranks. No organization committed to socialist equality would put the "rights" of zygotes above those of women.

I agree that any progressive government would formulate programs to aid those women who choose to bear children. It is politically schizophrenic, though, to claim that outlawing abortion for those women who choose not to carry through with an unwanted pregnancy ought to accompany such necessary social programs. It is not possible to formulate a logical political analysis for adopting an anti-choice pro-women's rights position. These are ideologically mutually exclusive positions that cannot be wedded.

It is equally foolish to assert that "it is the rich and not the poor who favor legalized abortion." Wealthy women will always be able to obtain abortions. The poor are most affected by the misguided efforts of fetal-identified individuals like Perry to limit, or deny completely, access to safe, legal abortions. Recent polls on this subject do not back up Perry's claims. The overwhelming bulk of opposition to legal abortion comes not from the poor, but from those individuals socialized to fear and despise female sexuality.

Fertilized eggs are not "human beings" and abortion is not "murder." Outlawing women's right to terminate unwanted pregnancies, though, is most certainly anti-socialist. This is a sensitive, very personal issue best left to individual women, not the government.

—Gail Rowland  
Tallahassee, Fla.

## LIVE OR DIE?

THE UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT INVOLVING the USSR, U.S. and the South Korean jet reemphasizes the immediate necessity for strengthening communications and relationships between the U.S. and the USSR.

Where did contact go wrong here in this sophisticated electronic world? How could intelligence services track this incident for more than two hours, recording all actions, conversations and not once enter into direct exchange with the plane? Have we become such "hostages of paranoia" that these two major countries do not have the sophistication to engage in normal relations?

Imagine a subterranean chamber—an accident or error occurs where information is blocked or signals misread—a button is pushed setting off a nuclear holocaust. Loss of lives would be in the hundreds of millions, not 269.

The whole world is waiting for Reagan and Andropov to talk. Such incidents could not occur if both the U.S. and the USSR expanded their dialog, exchanges, developed an understanding of the considerable common interests we share, and the contribution our two countries together can make, not only to each other, but to the development of the rest of the world. Let us stop trying to add up which country contributes most to destabilizing world peace and prosperity. The U.S. track record is hardly flawless.

Let us beware of the dangers of the emotionalism as we play with words and half truths. It has been proven that sanctions accomplish nothing, but only widen the chasms between countries. The most dangerous thing is finding causes for cutting back communica-

tions and reasons for expanding military might.

Let us beware of sanctimonious statements with respect to human values when our record is far from commendable.

The bottom line question is: are we going to live together or die together?

—Erwin A. Salk  
Chicago

## JUST JOKING

FURTHER TO PAT AUFDERHEIDE'S REVIEW (ITT, Sept. 7), *Flashdance* is an exceptional allegory of the triumph of patriarchy. It's up front, but it runs deep. Alex(andra) says, "I told you, I don't think it's a good idea to go out with a boss." Her boss says, "Okay, you're fired. I'll pick you up at eight." And doesn't wait for an answer. (Just joking, of course. Patriarchy is always just joking.)

Our heroine is co-opted, scene after scene. The boss tails her after hours and prevents her rape (although he decides not to reveal himself in time to spare her expendable escort a broken nose). Then, like the shepherd who has chased off the wolf, he enters into a "close relationship" with his sheep—while continuing to monitor its career clandestinely.

Alex does revolt. She tosses a brick through her shepherd's window and causes a scene in the middle of the Liberty Tubes, but he knows better, and—as the film proceeds—she "learns" better. He suggests that her desire for independence is only a smokescreen for her fear of failure. Happy end? To ornament the home of a brave and free male who enjoys being a guy having a girl like her?

*Flashdance* is at pains to present Alex as exceptional, not least in her considerable resources of spirit. Her boss' need to master her, to obtain a controlling interest in "all that," is easy to understand. But what about *Flashdance*'s popularity among women? In fact, the film is about daughters—how they fail and whether it matters. The flap about its implausibility and about its reified vision of the industrial heartland must defer: *Flashdance* is plausible emotionally.

—Neil A. Ward  
Washington

## RESPECTFUL DIALOG

THANK YOU FOR THE EDITORIAL REPLY to Jo Maynes' letter denouncing me for being associated with the "right-wing Prolifers for Survival (PS)."

*In These Times*' willingness to air a range of views on the tough issues facing the left is one of its best features. Don't let anyone bait you out of it.

It is, as you pointed out, a mistake to characterize PS as "right-wing." PS is a group that opposes both the arms race and abortion. Both issues are fundamental to it. In pursuing these dual concerns, PSers turn up all over the map—left, right and center. Some ardently support legislation to ban abortion; while others, such as myself, just as ardently oppose such proposals. So far, we've managed to stay in respectful dialog with each other about these differing approaches—no small achievement!

I've found the mix at PS creative and vital and I am proud to be on its advisory board. I think the left needs to hear more about such groups; so I am also proud to be able to write for *In These Times*, which is one of the few left publications brave enough to face the controversy such reporting may produce.

—Chuck Fager  
Arlington, Va.

## INGRAINED PREJUDICE

EVERY MUCH RESENT MAURICE ISSERMAN's review (ITT, July 27) of *Communists in Harlem During the Depression*. Harold Cruse's book, *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* was not polemical but truthful, which probably is very hard for Isserman to appreciate.

From his rather generous review, I feel safe in surmising that the new book is much more to his liking, and reflects the kind of slurpy history that sweeps under the rug the ugliness of racial and cultural chauvinism as practiced by some of the Jewish bigwigs like Goldman in the Communist Party at the time. Hardly what Isserman likes to call "ingrained prejudices and innocent misunderstandings." They were consistent and deliberate and if the CP never developed permanent black cultural forms inside the Party's structure, the fault can be laid directly at the feet of those Jewish cultural zealots. The simple fact is that racism is not confined to those on the right but also on the left. Racism will always exist in America as long as European culture is considered superior to all others.

—Shirley Washington  
Norton, Mass.

## CORRECTION

The letter last week mistakenly signed by Sy Rosen was written by Seymour (Sy) Posner. We regret the error.

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STR1



## SHANGHAI JOURNAL



Photographer unknown

# The James boys live again in China

By Henry Rosemont Jr.

**W**HILE WALKING IN the old section of Shanghai early in May I came across something I had not seen since arriving here 10 months earlier: a "Wanted" poster pasted to the side of a building. Before the day's perambulations were over I saw four more of the same.

A month later and 1,500 miles to the northeast I saw the poster again in Harbin, and yet again in Nanchang—500 miles southeast of Shanghai—at the end of June.

The poster was in several respects different from the reading matter provided by the U.S. Postal Service: it more nearly resembled an old-fashioned broadside (about 20 by 30 inches), only frontal (and fuzzy) photographs of the suspects were given, there were no aliases listed, no fingerprint plates; and of course it was written in Chinese.

Relatively few facts were proffered. Two brothers, in their late 20s, are being sought by the Public Security Bureau. They are armed, and believed to be dan-

gerous. Accurate information as to their whereabouts will secure for the informant a reward of 500 yuan, double that sum if the information leads directly to their capture. And the reward will be doubled again—to 2,000 yuan—if the suspects are brought in tow to the authorities.

Intrigued and not a little puzzled by this poster, I began asking Chinese acquaintances about it, but the multiplicity of answers received did more to increase by respect for Rorschach than increase my understanding of the immediate situation. All and sundry offered a plethora of information—read "rumors"—they had heard. The brothers had escaped from prison (minority), they had committed armed robbery (half), they were killers (high majority). They are not political criminals (near unanimity), they have semi-automatic weapons (two responses).

How are they avoiding capture? (1) They are hiding out in major metropolitan areas like Shanghai (half), they could not possibly be doing so (ditto). (2) They are being housed and kept by village folk because: a) they threaten violence; b) they pay well for room and board; c) most people simply will not know they are wanted by the authorities; d) all combina-

tions of the above.

Less divergent but equally instructive were the answers given to my additional queries about personal reactions to the poster, and about how those persons believed their countrymen were reacting to it.

Among the younger people I talked to (not only students), there was a general tendency to say that, while they themselves had read the poster, most Chinese would ignore it, either because they believed it was not relevant to their lives, or because they would not want to become involved in official matters. That there were murderers on the loose in the People's Republic was regrettable, but unsurprising; simply a fact of life.

The older generation(s), Party and non-Party members alike, had a somewhat more uniform response, emotionally at least: depression; not merely because there was crime in China, but because the offering of a monetary reward for the capture of the criminals seemed to bespeak an acknowledgement that socialist principles are no longer sufficiently imperative for civic duties to be performed as a matter of course. In addition to the openness with which these opinions were offered, two further considerations suggested strongly that such responses are both genuine and widespread: 1) the amount of the reward is substantial, apprehending the suspects earning the successful bounty hunter the equivalent of more than two year's average wages; 2) the rumor currently circulating is that the Public Security Bureau has just been criticized severely at the highest levels of government for their handling of the case, in-

cluding the offering of a reward.

The posters are no longer to be seen, nor have they been for more than a month. Perhaps naively, I did not and do not see them as signalling the imminent *Untergang des Morgenlandes*. And yet, in the course of visiting several revolutionary museums that only chronicle the pre-liberation struggles of the Chinese peoples, my eyes of late have been uncommonly drawn to yellowed broadsides encased in glass, announcing on behalf of the Nationalist government the provision of a large sum of money simply, and quite literally, for the heads of revolutionary "agitators." The times are very different now, which everyone is very aware of, full well; but perhaps the Public Security Bureau indeed deserved criticism for its handling of the case, for the non-cognitive emotional pull of those posters even tugged at a foreigner.

Certainly these subjects no longer remain at large. Like every other American radiated daily by the U.S. media, I know that China is full of little old neighborhood ladies who check up on all within their domain, and that even relatives, neighbors and friends snoop to the point of making privacy impossible here. The Public Security Bureau must have reasons of its own for not announcing the capture of the suspects. "Not so," is the uniform reply of my Chinese friends; "This case is a national one, and the news of their capture will be broadcast immediately."

It is now four months since I saw the first poster. No news yet.

Henry Rosemont Jr. teaches philosophy at Fudan University in Shanghai, China.

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## DIALOG

# Mel King, the black in Boston's mayor race, is left choice

By Bob Keough

BOSTON

**T**HE CHOICE BETWEEN MEL King and Ray Flynn in 1983 Boston mayoral race has made for controversy and some animosity within the left here. In a "Perspective" (*In These Times*, Sept. 7), Peter Dreier made the case for choosing white "populist" Flynn over black "progressive" King. I think he made the wrong choice, and wish to provide the other half of this all-too-familiar argument.

Dreier says the central issue is who can best heal Boston's "wounds." But who is to be Boston's healer depends on what those wounds actually are.

Boston, both sides agree, is a divided city. For Flynn and his supporters, that division is fundamentally economic. The crux of it is the neglect of working-class and poor residential neighborhoods in the shadow of a booming downtown. "Economic justice" has been one of Flynn's main campaign themes, with him advocating rent control, a condo conversion ban and redistribution of resources to the neighborhoods.

As Dreier concedes, King has been as tireless and effective an advocate of the neighborhoods as Flynn. But for King, downtown vs. neighborhoods is not the only significant division in this city. "Bringing the city together"—a campaign theme in 1979 and 1983 alike—means resolving many contradictions and relieving many oppressions.

King has always promoted women's and gay liberation, earning him the endorsement of the Women's Political Caucus, the support of Boston NOW, and the allegiance of many gays and lesbians, despite gay gentry and landlords throwing the Gay Political Task Force endorsement to rent control opponent Larry Di-Cara. He is a critic of imperialism and militarism, opposing the proposed location of a Navy Surface Action Group in South Boston. Flynn supported the new naval base, despite his avowed support for Jobs with Peace. (The Navy decided on Staten Island, N.Y., instead.)

Among the many divisions in Boston, however, race stands out. Ever since the busing crisis of 1974, Boston has earned national notoriety for racism of the most virulent and dangerous sort. Bringing the city together has, for King, meant above all dealing with racism. He has always campaigned for affirmative action and full access for people of all races and ethnicities to city facilities, streets and politics.

Flynn does not, in fact, admit to racism as a distinct problem. Asked point blank in a television candidates' forum whether Boston were a racist city, Flynn replied: "I think the real problem is economic discrimination. ...There are poor whites and blacks who do not have access to the political power structure in the city." In his rhetoric, Flynn denies any difference in the political, economic and social realities confronting blacks and whites in Boston. "The problems are the same in South Boston as in Roxbury," Flynn is fond of saying.

I am embarrassed to have to argue this in a socialist publication, but there are dramatic differences in the quality and

the perception of life in Boston between blacks and whites—differences that do not just flow from "competition over scarce resources." King usually cites the 85 percent chance that Boston blacks will be discriminated against in housing in their lifetimes. The regional director of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has called Boston the "toughest city in America for a black to get a job." In a 1982 survey, Boston blacks were significantly less satisfied than whites with their housing, their neighborhoods, with the kind and quality of stores and restaurants nearby and with the parks and recreational facilities available to them. And despite miles of Massachusetts Bay coastline, there is no salt-water beach in the Boston area that blacks can go to in safety and security.

Discussions of race in Boston almost inevitably get around to the schools and desegregation. On this score, Flynn and his left supporters occasionally get defensive, complaining that the focus on his past anti-busing activism—like his legislative attempt to cut off state abortion funding—just obscures how much he has changed.

But on race and education, Flynn has changed nary a bit. He continues to oppose busing, on "educational" grounds.

campaign make those questions sharper than Dreier is willing to admit. He tries to make his own preference appear self-evident by claiming that Flynn is building the kind of "permanent coalition of left forces" that King, as a black in Boston, could not assemble, and that Flynn is pulling away in the race. And he makes that choice palatable by casting doubt on King's support in the black community, and even on the seriousness of his candidacy. On all counts, the facts fail to support Dreier's conclusions.

Mel King is very much in this race. I don't know where Dreier found his "neutral poll" with Flynn at 21 percent and King at 15 percent; none of the nine polls that I am aware of have placed Flynn higher than 17 percent. The most recent poll, taken for WBZ-TV, puts Flynn at 17 percent and King at 15 percent. (At press time a poll was taken for WCVV-TV, the first to compensate for the undercounting of black voters, placed King at 18 percent and Flynn at 14 percent, both behind David Finnegan at 26 percent.)

If Flynn gets into the runoff, it will be by narrowly eliminating the field's only black candidate. For Flynn's left support, that will be more palatable if King is seen as isolated on the left, rather than as a representative of the black community. But that won't wash. The black political establishment has almost uniformly fallen into place behind King—remarkably so, considering he is its furthest left public figure. In 1979, 55 percent of the black vote was an excellent showing for King, considering that campaign was purely symbolic and run against then-unbeatable Kevin White—who had always run strongly in the black community. And while we humbly admit that voter registration in Boston has not been "as successful" as in Chicago and Philadel-

tical.

So the strategic choice made by Dreier and others was to become the marginal left wing of an overwhelmingly white campaign representing some progressive, class-based economics and some moderate-to-conservative political and social views rather than join a campaign for consistently left policies rooted in the black community and striving for support everywhere. The rationale is that two-thirds of the Boston electorate is white and white working people cannot be persuaded to vote for a black mayoral candidate. This line of reasoning must give pause. Will these left strategists ever see fit to back a black for mayor? Would they ever, let alone in 1984, support a black presidential candidate? Or is settling for an "acceptable" white candidate always preferable, as long as whites are in the majority, to working to persuade white working people to listen to a black candidate?

This last question has particularly disturbing implications for the morning after the October 11 primary. If King does manage to beat Flynn, what will Flynn's

**King is still very much a contender. In the most recent poll, he rates four points higher than Ray Flynn, the other left runner.**



He claims that busing has not benefitted a single student, which is simply not true. While his aversion to violence in the busing turmoil did alienate him from South Boston's more brutal elements—at a real political cost—his current pledge to "stand by his record" and his failure ever to condemn the racism, not just the violence, of those who attacked the school buses leave no doubt as to which side he is on today.

Flynn says that he does not oppose desegregation, just busing. But rather than proposing a mandatory desegregation plan, Flynn has adopted a voluntary plan that would resurrect "neighborhood schools," despite the continued segregation of Boston housing. That plan is a proposal of the Educational Planning Group, an advisory body that was boycotted by the two black school committee members when, for all practical purposes, it excluded teachers and parents.

## Strategic questions.

As Dreier suggests, the choice between King and Flynn raises serious strategic questions. But the realities of the 1983

phia (there are only 76,000 blacks eligible to vote in Boston), it has set new records: the number of new voters since January 1 is more than 36,000 and is expected to reach 45,000 before registration is closed. While there is no way of knowing how many of the new voters are people of color, these numbers will certainly be significant in a race where 35,000 votes is likely to be enough to get a candidate into the runoff.

But what of the "permanent left coalition" forming behind Flynn, and his "surprising support" among minorities and feminists? The simple truth is that it isn't there. The WBZ poll places Flynn's non-white support at a mere 1 percent. And while some individual feminists active in labor and housing do support him, Flynn has been able to make no credible appeal to the Boston women's movement. For a feminist community steeped in reproductive rights struggles, Flynn's opposition to abortion still rankles, and his new-found interest in daycare and comparable worth seems an attempt to define women's oppression; like racism, as simply economic, not social and poli-

*Boston's racism remains a disputed issue between the left mayoral candidates.*

left supporters be able to bring to the final campaign against status quo candidate David Finnegan? Not Flynn's base: in the WBZ poll, a whopping 44 percent of Flynn's supporters chose Finnegan as their second choice, with only 5 percent choosing King. To be any help at all, these left Flynn supporters will have to begin the job they tried to avoid by going with Flynn in the first place: convincing white working people to vote for a progressive black candidate. Only now they will have but five weeks to do so.

Win or lose, the Mel King campaign is changing the city of Boston, gaining new respect for peoples and politics previously neglected and ignored. Let us hope that process does not end prematurely because white leftists, some uniquely positioned to influence working-class whites, chose to accommodate rather than challenge the status quo.

*Bob Keough, a former Machinist and union organizer, works in the Mel King campaign.*





## LIFE IN THE U.S.

By Shepherd Bliss

### SCOTT NEARING

## "Just a tough USA radical"

Scott Nearing died quietly in his sleep on August 24 at home in Harborside, Maine, three weeks after his 100th birthday.

The long-time socialist died in a stone home that he and his wife Helen Nearing, 79, had built with their own hands. The Nearings moved to rural New England during the Depression to homestead and soon became leaders of the back-to-the-land movement.

Describing himself a decade ago, Nearing asserted, "I have been a socialist for a long time, but I am not a Marxist—just a tough, U.S.A. radical." Though he was a long-time critic of "the American way of life," Nearing was also an example of the characteristic American qualities of pioneering spirit and love of freedom.

Nearing was a pacifist, environmentalist and organic farmer. In his autobiography, *The Making of a Radical*, published in 1972, he explained, "I became a socialist in order to plan and work for a cooperative social pattern that will give maximum opportunity for human life at its most constructive and creative levels."

"Scott taught me economics and politics and I taught him my concerns, including Eastern religions," Helen Nearing told me three days after Scott's death as we sat in the room where Nearing had died. "If he hadn't been interested in those areas, we never

would have been able to stay together so long."

The Nearings, who had lived together for 55 years, hosted a steady stream of visitors to their farm in recent years. They came to talk about a wide range of concerns, from small items like how to grow certain plants to questions like how to prevent nuclear war.

The lively, spontaneous Helen Nearing also showed me numerous articles written about and by her husband and his long career challenging "Western civilization." They included reviews of Nearing's appearance in the recent Hollywood movie *Reds*, which was about Nearing's friend John Reed.

#### Ahead of his time.

From his protest against child labor at the turn of the century to his actions against nuclear war, Nearing was often far ahead of his time. On the day in 1945 when the U.S. dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, for example, he "dissociated" himself from the U.S. government be-

cause he "felt that the use of atomic weapons against Japan was not only a crime against humanity but was a blunder which would lead to a gigantic buildup of the planet's destructive force."

Born in a village in Pennsylvania in 1883, Nearing decided to become a teacher and received a doctorate in economics. After teaching at the University of Pennsylvania for nine years, he was fired in a nationally publicized case for protesting child labor. He lost his next college teaching job at the University of Toledo for speaking out against World War I at a time when war fever was sweeping this country.

A major influence on Nearing in these early years of political activity was Tolstoy, "whose writings helped me understand social responsibility, war and peace, and the need for mass solidarity," he said.

Nearing joined the Socialist Party in 1917 and was its candidate for Congress from New York City in 1918, facing New York's future mayor Fiorello La Guardia. He lectured at the Par-

ty's Rand School, which published his anti-war book *The Great Madness*. Because of the book he was indicted in 1919 under the Espionage Act for "attempting to cause insubordination and mutiny in the armed forces." Nearing represented himself in the trial, which he used as a forum to spread his ideas. A jury acquitted him.

Nearing left the Socialist Party in 1922 because of its attacks on the USSR. He later joined the Communist Party, but was expelled because of his book on imperialism, *The Twilight Empire*, which differed from the party analysis.

Nearing was a popular public speaker throughout his life. He debated people like Clarence Darrow and Bertrand Russell to full houses at Madison Square Garden, and later made frequent campus lectures, as well as speaking to small gatherings in church basements from coast to coast.

But it was a book that Nearing co-authored with his wife, *Living the Good Life*, originally published in 1954, which made his views widely known. This book details the simple life that the couple have lived since deciding in the Depression that "it is better to live poor in the country than in the city."

In the book, the Nearings describe their ideal typical day in the country—"four hours of bread labor, four hours of professional activity and four hours of association with fellow men"—as well as their vegetarian diet: usually fruit and herb tea for breakfast, soup and cereal for lunch and salad and vegetables for dinner, 85 percent of which they grew themselves.

#### Expansion, not retreat.

While a move from the city to the country sometimes weans people away from political activity, for Nearing it was clearly a deepening and expansion of the socialist views. The Nearings spoke to those critical of their move to the country, "Our life in the country is not an ivory tower retreat. It is

sane living in an insane world. It is a milieu in which active people can spend their ripe years." From his rural home Nearing continued to comment on world events (including two decades of writing a column for *Monthly Review*) and agitate for socialism and peace.

In his autobiography he asserted, "The night that is thickening over the U.S. and its obsolete way of life is only one aspect of the profound planet-wide transformation that is presently taking place in the whole of human culture."

In the final interviews before his death Nearing spoke about the "perilous" moment in world history. "The boat is sinking. We're in chaos, not on the road to chaos."

Yet he held open the opportunity of our historical moment. "This chaos may be associated with a very complete change in the pattern of human existence. Humanity's coming of age is involved. For a long time, human beings have been devoted to war. Now no rational person can possibly defend war as a means of achieving social ends."

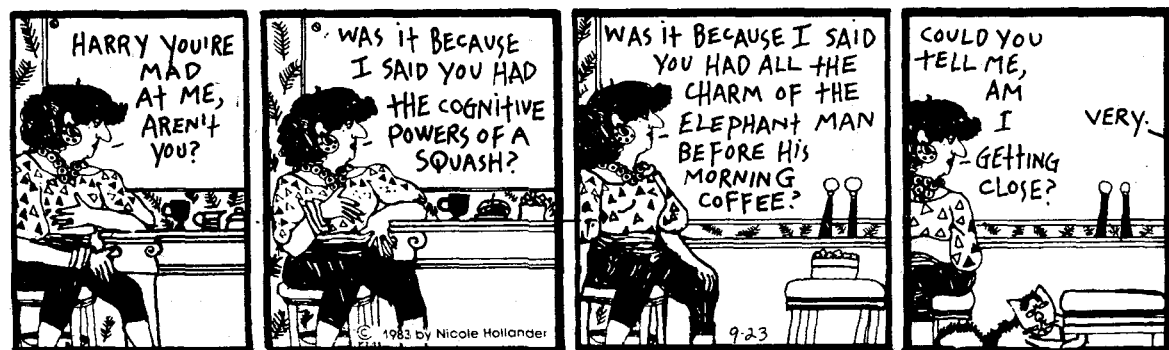
I asked Helen Nearing what she planned to do now that her husband was gone, knowing that the Nearings always believed in planning. "My first thought was to go to Europe, where I've longed to live," she responded. "But I realized that to do so would be selfish. So I think I'll turn this house into a community center and call it the 'Good Life Center' and hold open house like we did when Scott was here."

For a list of books by Scott and Helen Nearing write: Social Science Institute, Harborside, Maine 04642.

Shepherd Bliss is lecturer in psychology at John F. Kennedy University in California, where he specializes in issues of aging. He is currently researching the Nearings' lives and would appreciate receiving information at P.O. Box 1133, Berkeley, CA 94701.

### Sylvia

by Nicole Hollander





## ART«»ENTERTAINMENT

## FILM

Partisan critics  
get bad reviews

By Valerie Ellis

The old adage, if you can't say something good don't say anything at all—an all too prevalent attitude among critics of independent and left artistic work—got the prize for most-favorite whipping boy among the film and videomakers, critics and media professionals at the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) conference held in Minneapolis this summer.

"I think that this belief, almost ideology and certainly dogmatism, has had a terrible effect on criticism for independent film," commented B. Ruby Rich, *Village Voice* critic and film program director at the New York State Council on the Arts. "This kind of criticism has very little effect because I don't know what reader in his right mind would believe a critic who never says anything bad."

The lack of rigorous criticism is at least a partial explanation for the small audiences at showings of independently produced films and video and for the economic troubles facing distributors of these works. This critical vacuum does little to generate new audiences. But the problem really goes deeper: a lot of bad work passes for good primarily because it isn't getting seriously reviewed.

"What's keeping these movies in the incubator," said *Village Voice* critic Carrie Rickey, "is that while most of us are cultural democrats we are aesthetic plutocrats. We believe in a trickle-down theory of aesthetics. Any ideas in mass culture come from the intellectual elite." The notion that the masses can't take what the avant-garde dishes out may not be as accurate as we thought, she suggested. Being outside the mainstream creates a kind of safe intellectual haven where the criticism that goes along with commerce doesn't exist, but neither does the chance to reach the general public.

## Critics' snow-blindness.

But the mere existence of critics and criticism for independently produced work wouldn't solve the problem of defining what makes "good," "bad" or "significant" film and video. Just as important is whether or not a critic has the background, awareness and sensitivity about the unfamiliar cultures and traditions that many independent works come out of.

Rich identified "snow-blindness" as a central mistake critics make. They can't see anything but white. "Although it's not as big a problem as it once was," she said, "it still exists. It's a very deep aesthetic problem because they [critics] can't in fact see what's there and, even worse, they don't know that they can't see." This problem applies not only to non-white and Third

World film and video but also to works made by feminists, lesbians and gay men.

Rickey suggested that the lack of critical writing on non-white works is partially the result of poor packaging. "These films are not packaged in a way that I can review them for an audience," she said. "It's very difficult to get editors to take reviews of just one black film and one that isn't showing enough times. There's no opportunity or context to review work. We need to be able to create trends, excitement, because that's what good journalism is all about."

Denise Oliver, executive director of the Black Filmmaker

Foundation, said the problem goes beyond poor packaging. "Critics don't review independent films made by non-whites at all.... They talk about Third World films, but I haven't met more than two American critics who've seen more than 10 black films when there's a body of work that now exceeds 120. I've never read any hard-hitting criticism of black film in America; I've only seen this in Europe."

## Money talks.

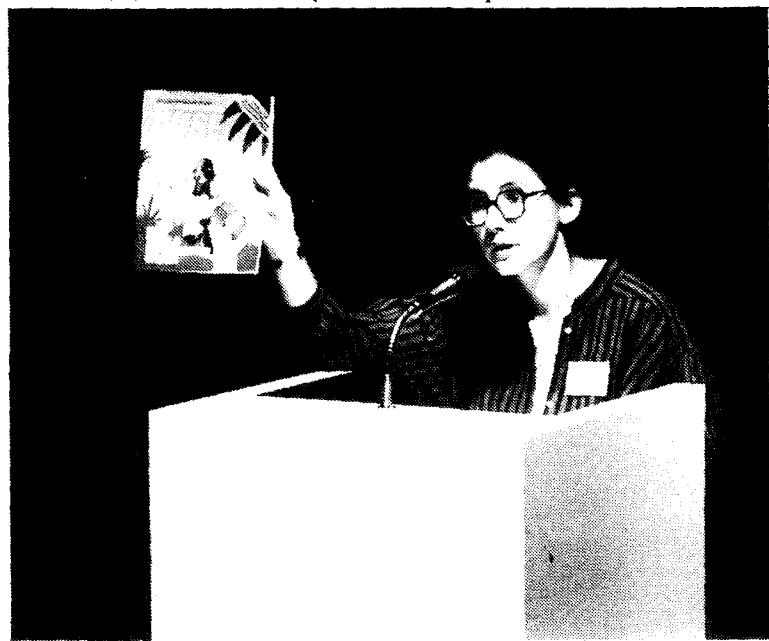
Money was, of course, the main topic at NAMAC, but the critics on hand tackled the subject in a different way from others. Rich explored the connection between criticism and distribution. She argued that the link between the two should be obvious and cited a recent example from the *Village Voice* to make her point. Several months ago, she and J. Hoberman did a front-page spread for that paper on Belgian filmmaker Chantal Akerman. "By 10 a.m. the next morning," she said, "Chantal Akerman received a call from a distributor who hadn't picked up her films for 10

years and within 24 hours Film Forum had been called by *New York* magazine and *Newsweek* requesting press screenings of the film."

Linking criticism and distribution is essential, Rich noted, therefore artists need to learn how to deal with critics (what

their deadlines are, limitations in what they can do, etc.) in order to get their work reviewed. Films need to be written about and read about by a wide audience in order to "live and breathe," she said.

Valerie Ellis is a film critic in Minneapolis.



Film critic B. Ruby Rich called reviewers who offer only praise for independent movies dogmatists.

## FOLK MUSIC

## Old, new songs in Nicaragua

By Gregory Landau

When I was a year old, in 1956, Pete Seeger slept on a couch in my parents' apartment in Madison, Wis., after he had sung a benefit performance for the Labor Youth League (LYL). I admit that I do not remember the concert, but I learned his performance provoked the university to suspend the LYL for "violating

the music monopoly" held by an official campus music group. Seeger, it seemed, had sung for more minutes than he had talked and therefore his performance was officially declared music, and since the LYL was a political organization, that meant it had violated the rules.

In Managua 27 years later, Seeger performed many of the same songs at the *Festival de la Nueva Cancion* (New Song Festival). At

63, he projected the image of an enthusiastic adolescent, singing and talking his way through the history of a musical movement that few people know about.

"Throughout history, many peoples have sung songs of struggle, but one might say that the New Song Movement in the U.S. began about 43 years ago," he explained, "when a young man named Woody Guthrie came to New York from Oklahoma. There he met a man who was singing songs to organize black and white farmworkers in the South. His name was Lee Hays. I had just dropped out of Harvard and together we formed the Almanac Singers, and we sang for unions all over the country."

I translated for Seeger as he traveled through Nicaragua meeting musicians and chatting with workers who were discussing whether they were moving too slowly or too quickly toward socialism.

During his performance at the New Song Festival, the stage that floats on Managua's volcanic lake actually began to rock from the thunderous applause. With his gringo Spanish and plinking banjo, Seeger communicated a message that Nicaraguans wanted so much to hear: that the people of the U.S. and Nicaragua can be brought closer by methods such as music, despite the Reagan administration's undeclared war.

Carlos Mejia Godoy, Nicaragua's most popular singer, who combines traditional song forms with revolutionary messages and folk humor, embraced Pete after hearing Seeger sing his songs.

The audience grew very quiet as Pete sang "Cristo Ya Nacio En Palacaquina," a modern Christmas carol written by Godoy, in his aging but still sweet and compelling voice.

Seeger then sang "If I Had a Hammer," "Where Have All the

Flowers Gone" and "We Shall Overcome." The audience listened and then sang along. Seeger explained how each song arose. "Lee Hays came to me with the lyrics of a song but he didn't have a melody—a kind of gospel type of lyrics, since few words change in each verse. Our original recording of 'If I Had a Hammer' became a collector's item, which means that only collectors were able to buy it.

"I didn't like 'Where Have All the Flowers Gone' when I first wrote it. I added an Irish melody to lyrics based on a Ukrainian song and then I sang it at a university and the president of the local folk club heard it and showed it to the Kingston Trio, who then recorded it and made it famous. Then I realized it was a good song.

"And 'We Shall Overcome' was taught to a white woman by tobacco workers in the South in 1945," he said. "She showed it to me and we published it in *Sing Out* magazine in 1947. In 1960 a young white man brought it back to the South and within three months it had become the hymn of the civil rights movement."

As Seeger talked and listened, on and off stage, he offered a sense of optimism to the Nicaraguans, showing them how many Americans feel.

"The defeat of American forces in Vietnam was a defeat for the Pentagon," he declared, "not for the American people, just as the defeat of the CIA-backed invasion of Nicaragua will be a victory not only for the peoples of Latin America, but for the American people as well. As singers we have to make people aware of the situation and try to stop these CIA criminals." Then he began to pick his banjo.

Gregory Landau is the lead guitarist for Grupo Mancotal, a Nicaraguan band.



Pete Seeger picked and sang his way through Nicaragua, telling people that many Americans oppose Reagan's policies.



## INPRINT

**The Emperor: Downfall of an Autocrat**

By Ryszard Kapuscinski

Translated by William R. Brand and Katarzyna Mroczkowska-Brand

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 164 pp., \$12.95

By Pat Aufderheide

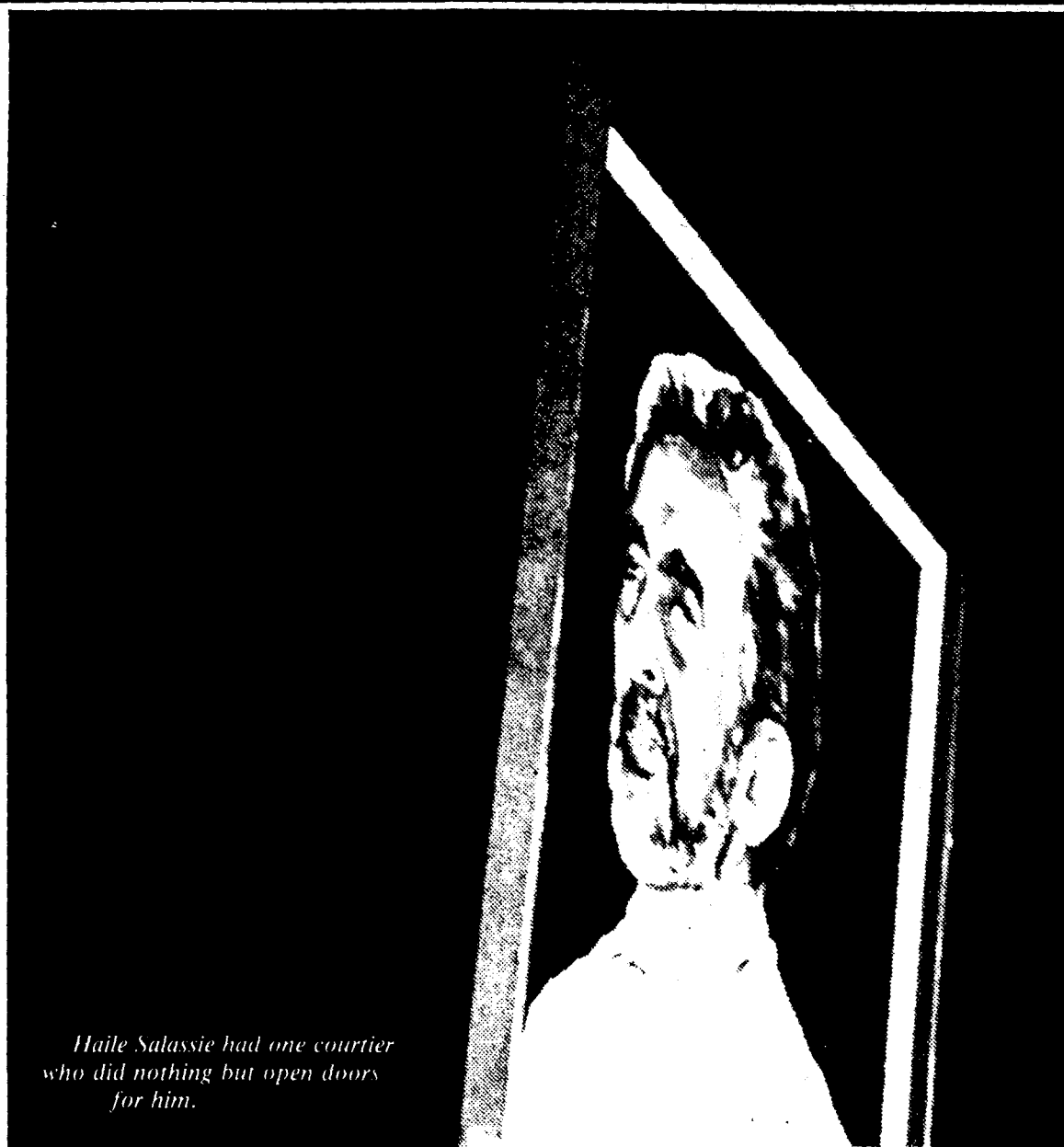
When Ethiopian army officers finally brought an end to the rule of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974, Polish reporter Ryszard Kapuscinski already was an old hand on the scene. Not only had he previously covered Ethiopia for the Polish Press Agency, he had travelled throughout the Third World for decades, always getting the stories behind the story.

This time, he had a rare opportunity—to interview the courtiers of an instant *ancien regime*. *The Emperor*, which appeared in Poland in 1978, is the result.

Avidly read all over Poland, it was seen as an allegory to Polish politics—a cautionary tale for dictators. But it's much more than that. It is an insider's view of hierarchical society, of the terms of authoritarian power, of the cost of underdevelopment and of the origins of revolution. There are insights here about authoritarian stratagems of multinational corporations, for instance, and rich material for anyone looking to understand the roots of Central American peasant revolt and military coups. For those who study state formation—the growth of bureaucracies and the development of elite factions around centralized power—it's a riotously colorful case study.

All of this goes without even mentioning the entertainment value of scenes from a history that keeps threatening to turn into a madly magical realist novel.

The glory days of Haile Selassie's court were structured around some simple axioms. The emperor cultivated loyalty first and last, and discouraged competence. As one courtier puts it, "The King of Kings preferred bad ministers....he liked to appear in a favorable light by contrast." He expected and even en-



Haile Selassie had one courtier who did nothing but open doors for him.

## ETHIOPIA

## All the emperor's men

couraged corruption among his minions—it was the spoils of loyalty.

**Minister of pillows.**

One official had nothing more to do than to open the door at just the right time for the emperor. Another's function was to bow distinctively to signal the end of a reception hour (they called him the emperor's cuckoo clock at court). Still another was in charge of 52 different-sized pillows to slip under the emperor's feet on different-sized thrones, so that his feet would never touch the floor. The emperor knew the value of appearance, and the subversive power of humor—he forbade jokes at court.

When things began to fall apart, they did so in ways that betrayed the terms of the old order. A 1960 coup, led by foreign-educated officials embarrassed by the stagnancy of Ethiopian economy and society, failed. But when, prompted by the warning sign of the coup, the emperor attempted to add economic development to his imperial agenda, he planted the seeds of his own fall. His development projects fostered a new group of technicians: the opening of a university produced dissident students; in order to quell disorder, the army size was increased.

The old terms of power clashed with the new. Officials sabotaged the development reforms, and generals absconded with the army budget—the spoils of loyalty, after all. The emperor's carefully cultivated "nest of mediocrity" at court divided into three

equally ineffective factions arguing over how to restore order: "talkers," who wanted to negotiate; "jailers," who wanted repression; and the biggest group, "floaters," who just wanted to go with the flow.

The crisis wasn't precipitated by oppression—that had been around a long, long time. As the emperor himself explained to over-greedy tax collectors, a poor person can tolerate immense burdens, but will not stomach a sudden new one. He feels, one courtier recalls, that "you have trampled what remains of his already strangled dignity, taken him for an idiot who doesn't see, feel or understand. A man doesn't seize an ax in defense of his wallet, but in defense of his dignity."

That's what happened when the army revolted, too, over the issue of funerals. The officers had a right to be buried, but bodies of common soldiers were abandoned to vultures, and as combat deaths increased, that became intolerable.

**Outraged students.**

The outrage of the oppressed was matched by demands from the newly favored, not just students but ambitious young officers. Joining them were frustrated clerks and technicians, who the old courtiers despised.

"Who destroyed our empire?" rants one. "Neither those who had too much, nor those who had nothing, but those who had a bit."

These reminiscences unself-consciously present the world-

*"A man does not seize an ax in defense of his wallet, but in defense of his dignity," Selassie said before his fall.*

view of those who serve established power. The royal purse-bearer—someone who has had daily experience with royal non-payment of debt to the working poor—has contempt for the masses: "Wherever His Majesty went, the people showed their uncontrolled, insatiable greed."

Another courtier blames foreign journalists—who can never be incorporated into the web of loyalty—for fomenting trouble by reporting on famine. "Death from hunger had existed in our empire for hundreds of years, an everyday, natural thing," he protests. After all, he says, "it is not bad for national order and a sense of national humility that the subjects be rendered skinnier, thinned down a bit."

These people cannot imagine change without total destruction, and they can't see why any change was necessary. "Our empire had existed for hundreds,

even thousands of years, without any noticeable development. All the while its leaders were respected, venerated, worshipped."

**Creative quoting.**

The voices are eloquent, even elegant and sometimes spiced with an elegant wit. But are they authentic? Just how much has this journalist, whose own eloquence is manifest in introductions and asides, crafted his own style and even his own political insights into their remarks? There is a pervasive poetry to everyone's commentary, and a shared tendency to use certain stylistic forms—metonymy of body parts, for instance.

There is also a savage irony in their remarks that echoes his style. One man, describing the rising tide of informers, says that people learned to speak in code, and that "we simple and uneducated folk suddenly became a bilingual nation."

But suppose the journalist has refined his speakers' comments into a condensed, more poetic form. The voices still present a distinctive perspective, and what they have to tell us is well worth thinking about.

The journalist's art and craft transform these reminiscences into unforgettable, movie-like scenes—scenes that encourage one to generalize from Joan Didion's recent perception that Garcia Marquez' "magical realism" is actually social realism. For instance, at one point Kapuscinski leaves an opulent banquet for foreign dignitaries. Walking out to the back of the palace, he hears the sound of "shifting, murmuring, squishing, sighing and smacking" rising and falling with the ends of course in an interminable meal. It is the sound of massed beggars feeding on scraps that waiters relay to them.

Or consider this example of managing dissent with old-style ritual: after student unrest, one prince stages a pro-emperor student demonstration, dressing police up as students. Real students counterdemonstrate, a student is killed and a huge funeral turns into another anti-emperor demonstration. More deaths and massive arrests result, and the emperor closes the university for a year—"thus saving the lives of many young people," says a courtier gratefully.

**Accidents of history.**

The last days of empire have a macabre humor. Courtiers become afraid to go home, since army officers are picking them off one by one. They abandon their former concern for rank and status, bedding down helter-skelter in the palace, squabbling over curtains they tear down to use for blankets. In the mornings they must all perform calisthenics, which the emperor has ordered and even imported Swedish physicians to conduct. The emperor retreats finally to his office, where military officers show up to hunt for hidden wealth. They lift up the Persian carpet to reveal another, green carpet beneath it composed of rolls of dollar bills.

These are the implausible realities of a way of life that, once it was over, seemed fabulous even to its own participants. "Wasn't it just yesterday?" says one. "Yesterday, but a century ago. In this city, but on a planet that is now far away." Maybe that once-upon-a-time quality to the reminiscences is no artistic recreation. It may legitimately belong to the courtiers themselves, who are now accidents of history. ■

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## SPORTS

# Kicking around a few thoughts about soccer

## Soccer Madness

By Janet Lever

University of Chicago Press,  
200 pp., \$17.50

### By Lester Rodney

Back in my intensely sports-minded youth—light years before Little League, television and computer games—we kids played baseball and football games on empty lots. Out on the streets, we played stickball, punchball, a form of non-tackling football we called “association,” and even an ingenious kind of hockey without ice. In high school I ran the middle and long distances, played some infield and, though weighing 120 pounds soaking wet, valiantly (stupidly) tried out for the glamor team—football. Two days of being crunched by the big boys was enough.

Soccer? A foreign game. We vaguely knew it existed. In more strongly ethnic neighborhoods you might see a few kids fooling with a soccer ball, though it undoubtedly carried the stigma of being non-American. Running around interminably after a bouncing ball and directing it with your feet and your head, for goodness sakes.

Later, as a sports writer, I became aware of weekend and evening league play before passionately involved fans. The players were workers and amateurs—Yugoslav, Hungarian, Polish, Italian, Scottish and German-Americans, with the teams organized by nationality. Famous soccer teams from abroad occasionally came over here to play exhibition games before spectators who were probably 95 percent foreign born, or first generation Americans. It was a foreign scene, off to one side.

And today?

We have a professional soccer league, but only a handful of the players are native born, and the league is no attendance threat to the American Big Three of team sports—baseball, football and basketball. It gets very secondary treatment in the sports pages of the nation's newspapers.

The best comment on American fans' interest in soccer can be found in the price range of events in next year's Olympics, scheduled for Los Angeles. Top price for the championship soccer final is \$20, just \$5 more than field hockey. By comparison, top price for the basketball final is \$95.

### Soccer at the grassroots.

Ah, but “down below” something significant is going on. One million American youngsters now play on organized soccer teams. That's about half as many as play Little League baseball. Youth soccer is becoming a familiar part of the suburban scene, no longer bearing a “foreign” stigma. Our friendly neighborhood high school football coach out here in Southern California can be heard grumbling that he no longer always gets the best athletes to come out for the team, because some of them are opting for soccer (much to the relief of

some mothers who no longer have to worry about hemstitched knees, concussions or worse.)

And, glory be, soccer turns out to be a game in which the female of our species is enthusiastically and increasingly involved, even though they do not yet always get equal facilities, coaching and scheduling.

Soccer is a development that almost cries out for thoroughgoing tracing and analysis, giving some idea of just how far this upstart sport may go.

Janet Lever, a sociologist who has taught at Yale, Northwestern, UCLA and UC-San Diego, has not written such an examination. *Soccer Madness* is a many layered, absorbing study of soccer and its impact in Brazil—a land where the game drenches and permeates everyday life and where 200,000 fanatics waving huge team banners to samba rhythms jam the world's largest stadium in Rio, which features a moat 10 feet wide and 10 feet deep to keep them from getting at the players, referees and the rival fans across the way. It is the country that produced the world's most famous athlete, the nonpareil Pele, who led Brazil to two straight world championships, in 1958 and '62. The World Cup, the only true worldwide professional team championship event, is played quadrennially, but it takes two years and about 250 preliminary games to determine the participants for the final competition. After missing in '66, Brazil went bonkers over an unprecedented Third World title in '70, but hasn't won since.

(Confession: this traditional American sports fan, who has never seen a soccer match in the flesh, finally got hooked into watching last year's final rounds on TV, successfully rooting home the underdog Italians over the West Germans. Though the more picturesque style of the French team made them my favorites. If it happened to me, it must have happened that a lot more folks gained a possibly reluctant appreciation of the sport.)

### British beginnings.

*Soccer Madness*, in addition to being an excellent sociological study of a sport, its fans and its inter-relationship with “real

life,” details the origin of soccer and the way it was spread around the globe from England, where it all began. British sailors first brought the game to Brazil in 1884. As in other lands, the local elite learned it from the British and then the working class took up the sport.

The infrastructure of soccer in Brazil, as most other nations, is the non-profit club, which inevitably also plays a major social role in a community. (Schools in Brazil do not have our kind of sports facilities and competition.) Lever found that through the clubs and allied fan organizations, soccer fans gain a feeling of impact on their favorite teams that is missing in our profit-oriented setup for pro sports. It would be inconceivable in Brazil to yank a team out of its traditional base to another area, as has become commonplace here.

Just a couple of startling statistics: there are 8,300 professional soccer players in Brazil, three times the number of pro athletes in all U.S. sports. A mammoth lottery, looked upon favorably by Lever, provides much of the revenue needed by the clubs for the teams, the training of youngsters in juvenile play, and even some social services sorely lacking under the military regime. Lever found that 92 percent of all of Rio's adults bet at least once a month, and 62 percent once a week, using cards similar to the less legal ones found in many American workplaces during our football season. Interestingly, she asked Brazilians about betting against their own favorite teams and discovered that 60 percent of those who bet never give themselves that kind of conflict.

### Pele, the great one.

During her years in Brazil, the author came to know and admire Pele, and tells us a few things about the great one. He came from a typically poor family in a small city, was a shoeshine boy and peanut vendor helping to support his family, while his schooling suffered. When his great athletic talents were discovered, he became a soccer player at 15 and flamed into superstardom within two years. When he retired at 33 he was the kind of international sports celebrity beyond the ken of Americans. His

ebullient personality and always cordial response to fans clamoring for a word or an autograph added to his popularity.

Fabulous contracts never dulled his consciousness of his Brazilianess, his class origins and his blackness. When the New York Cosmos lured him out of retirement to give instant credibility to the emerging soccer league here, Pele as part of the deal insisted that Warner Communications, parent corporation of the Cosmos, sponsor and bankroll a sports school for the kids of Santos, his native town. We learn that after scoring his historic 1,000th goal, he wept and said: “Remember the children, remember the poor children.”

### Not a guidebook to soccer.

What one would like to see in a book called *Soccer Madness*, and doesn't get, is a description of the game itself—its rules, techniques and tactics, something about the overriding role of defense and the offside whistle, which tend to turn off Americans who never played the sport. The world's number one game still needs a popular introduction to we insular isolates.

Also on the negative side, the book tends to go overboard on tedious scholastic footnoting. A scrupulously thorough worker (as a sociologist ought to be), Lever sometimes gets swept away by her findings and loses the difference between a book and a doctoral dissertation. We sometimes learn more about the inner organization of Brazilian soccer than we really care to know.

A few lines showing Lever's personal judgment made this reader wince. Try “Argentina's infamous urban guerrillas, the

*Clubs and fan organizations in Brazil give soccer fans a feeling of impact on the game that is missing in our profit-minded professional sports set-up.*

Montoneros...,” as though *that's* what's been wrong with Argentina, not the infamous murderous government. And, “people everywhere...sharing the joy of Prince Charles' wedding.” Everywhere? Even in Dublin?

However, Lever is not at all sycophantic toward Brazil's military rulers, and does speak of their attempt to manipulate soccer madness to their advantage.

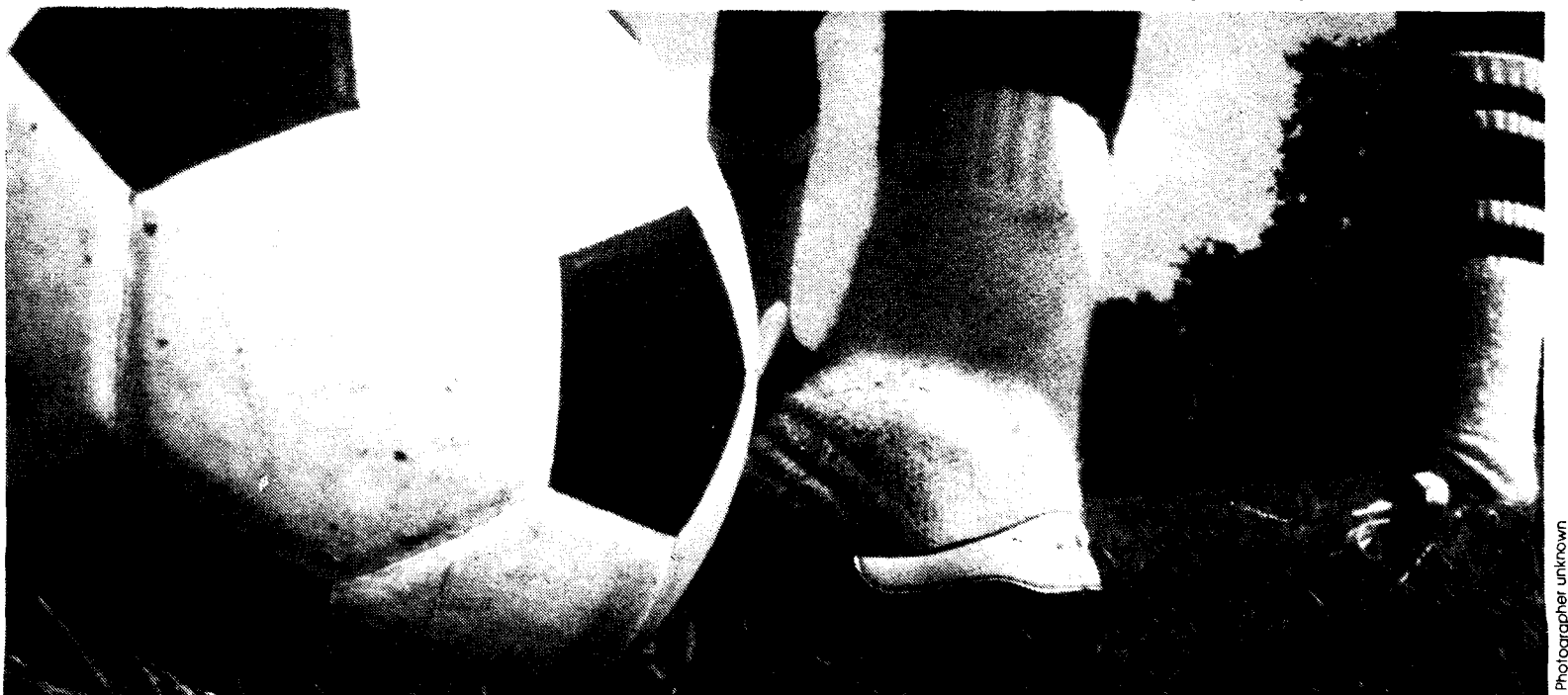
As a good sociologist, she delves into the old question as to whether professional sports is an opiate of the people, diverting them from the struggle for a better life. Drawing on her Brazilian experience, her answer is a strong no. “Nor is soccer an opiate that would stop the revolution,” she concludes. In fact, she sees it as a positive force for social change, through its very dynamics. In one chapter on “the paradox of sport,” she develops the thesis that international competitions “reinforce nationalism while simultaneously uniting people into a global folk culture...,” surely an interesting proposition for chewing over.

I recall some fellow leftists arguing that soccer would replace our football when a better way of life replaced capitalism. I didn't agree then, and in spite of my new appreciation for soccer, I don't now. Football grew out of the peculiar American experience. Certainly it is rough, sometimes brutal and it should probably carry a warning label: “Can be dangerous to your body.” But I like it better than soccer. So do most Americans. I doubt that will change. I *do* look forward to it evolving for the better some day, along with other aspects of American life now distorted by the *profit-uber-alles* ethic. No football coach in that happy day will be driven through fear of losing his job to teach dirty football, or to play a kid who is hurt.

Oh, but he (or she) can still be a character, can still celebrate individuality and run things his own way. That's American, not capitalistic. Our kind of socialism wants to take the corporate-dollar monkey off of sports' back, freeing sport for true individualism, which is not at the expense of others, or at the expense of the sport itself.

In the meantime, here comes soccer, long a stepchild, finding an increasing role in American life. And deservedly so. Let's hope that Janet Lever (or someone of equal talent) turns her attention to a look at this newest American sports phenomenon.

Lester Rodney was sports editor of the *Daily Worker*.





# Peace

Continued from page 7

half the night. Besides, Kelly's office does not have all the information about anti-missile actions people are asking about. This can be obtained from the Coordinating Committee, whose chair is Jo Leinen.

It perhaps should be emphasized that the German Coordinating Committee is both more authentically democratic in the way it was put together and more efficient in the work of coordinating than the somewhat more self-appointed leadership of comparable American structures such as the anti-war mobilization committees during the Vietnam war. The coalition includes religious, pacifist, environmentalist, civil rights and women's groups, the youth organization of the German Trade Union Confederation DGB and political groups such as the Green Party and the Social Democratic Party (SPD) youth organization—at least a third of the politically active populace.

"It is the strength of the coalition that gives us the force to challenge national and international policy," Quistorp said. "Coalition means conflicts, and to put together the coalition we have had to learn how to resolve conflicts."

The coalition began with seven groups that got together with the church-supported Reconciliation Action Peace Service (ASF) to organize the huge Oct. 10, 1981, Bonn demonstration that marked the birth of the mass protest movement against the NATO nuclear missile deployment. Since then, the coalition has been reinforced by a two-year process of "continuity and enlarging." Between major actions, the coalition members have had to iron out political differences in launching joint appeals.

Relations between individuals and groups in the German movement are often stormy and quarrelsome. Yet somehow the thing does not fly apart, and the work gets done. The idea seems to be that for conflicts to be resolved, they must first be brought out into the open and clarified. This is very demanding both intellectually and emotionally.

One reason for its success so far seems to be abandonment of the "vanguard" philosophy of political activism that gives priority to "the correct line." Instead, the prevailing political culture seems heavily influenced by a Protestant tradition of "examination of conscience" that at some point requires a self-critical effort to appreciate the other person's point of view.

Quistorp is currently president of the Confederation for Environment, the decentralized organization Petra Kelly, Roland Vogt and other Greens also came from. She said her political experience going back to SDS in the '60s made her "more interested in social

movements learning dialog" than anything else. "We have to learn to relate to each other."

She appreciated Black Congressional Caucus leader Rep. Walter Fauntroy coming out in opposition to Pershing II and Cruise missiles at the Washington rally. This was a step toward the sort of international coordination she sought.

But elsewhere, she did "not find the political consciousness that a German movement victory would be a victory for the American movement too."

Quistorp said she got the same feeling as other Germans who "feel very international" when they come to the U.S. But the "country is so huge, the media are so powerful" that she began to feel "very European, very German." For Americans, "Germany is just a little place to put military bases." Americans were not ready for dialog, but were content with a minimal exchange of information on the leadership level.

On the other hand, Europeans don't know enough about congressional efforts to cut funding for the Pershing II and Cruise missiles. Closer contacts could increase European awareness of legislative efforts to combat the arms race, she said.

Americans are too inclined to take the German peace movement for "a little leftist thing" without realizing it is a "people's resistance," Quistorp explained. This might be partly because "Americans have to deal with so many things now: the MX, Central America and so on."

In the U.S., she was surprised to discover that as a German she was expected to "bear a special burden of guilt." Born in 1945, "the year of Hiroshima," into a family that had been anti-Nazi for religious reasons, she grew up in a Germany where people hardly wanted to admit they were German. She imagined that the Vietnam war had somehow equalized German and American awareness that their countries could do wrong. So she was surprised to find a deep and pervasive sense of national self-satisfaction in the U.S. such as no longer exists in Germany.

"One reason Americans may prefer to relate to Petra Kelly is that she is half American and they can relate to her American half," Quistorp suggested. "Perhaps they are not relating to the German peace movement because then they would have to relate to a lot of Germans, and they're not ready for that."

Every nationality has its advantages and disadvantages, she observed. "For me, it's hard to get a balanced view of American society. I think there should be a real dialog—not superficial—on the history of our countries, inside an international coordination."

One subject to examine could be "British, American and French responsibility for the rise of fascism—there is not enough awareness of this." The objective of such a dialog would not be to create more guilt complexes but to build an international "coalition of conscience" for peace and social justice.

—D.J.

# Lippard

Continued from page 12

ASTC, had told us back in Managua that our trip to the front was necessary because it was "a source of tremendous inspiration for the peasants and soldiers who tomorrow may be dead." Trying to be inspiring, we made the V-sign and hollered *No Pasaran* out the bus windows at the troops. We too could only offer our feelings.

How can the U.S. pretend to be at war with a people who have, in one of the most unequal struggles in history, conquered an unspeakably cruel dictator, a people who in four short years, under the most economically and militarily embattled circumstances, have achieved a 16-point gain in the Overseas Development Council's (a private Washington-based organization) "physical quality of life" index, which includes literacy (from 12 percent to 50 percent), infant mortality and life expectancy—the greatest improvements in this hemisphere. A people who have wiped out polio, begun to provide housing for the poor other than cardboard and thatch huts, who despite shortages and subversion from within are resisting demoralization. A people who write poetry, invoke Jefferson, Whitman

and Madison and make distinctions between the American intelligentsia and the CIA. A people whose idea of public sculpture is a giant chunk of jagged bronze that turned out to be a horse's veined underbelly, balls, haunch and huge prancing hoof—the remains (labeled) of Somoza's equestrian statue.

The Sandinista revolution isn't perfect and none of its leaders claim it is. We can observe it, criticize it and inform ourselves about it. But one thing is very clear—that its perfection or lack thereof is none of the Reagan administration's business.

One last image, from the anniversary celebration: hundreds of mostly teenage militia stood in the front row of the audience for some five hours in the heat, a long line, arms linked. When the speeches were over and the dust rose from 200,000 people leaving the field, the line held dutifully, but began to sway to dance music from the PA system; roses were thrown, young faces beamed; here and there couples of young women broke away to dance a few steps together before rejoining the line. At the reception afterward for a truly populist cross-section—from peasant representatives of the mass organizations to the junta, press and diplomats—the scar-faced Commandante Cabezas danced as though he hadn't a care in the world. This is a revolution Emma Goldman would have liked.

Lucy Lippard writes on art for the *Village Voice*.

## CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **Beth Maschiot**.

### BOSTON, MA

#### September 24

Democratic Socialists of America Educational Conference and 1983 Boston local convention. 10-12 a.m. workshops on: Democratic Party, Labor, Religion, Peace. 1-3 p.m. Barbara Ehrenreich will speak on "The Democratic Left in the Reagan Era." 3-5 p.m. Boston DSA Convention. At Phillips Brooks House, Harvard Yard, Cambridge. Donation appreciated. For more info, call (617) 426-9026.

#### October 13-November 19

"Glory, Glory"—a photo exhibit by the French photo-journalist Lionel Delevingne opens with a brief presentation and reception with Delevingne on Thursday, Oct. 13 at 7:30 p.m. at the French Library, 53 Marlborough St. The show is divided into 3 themes—parades and civic events that show "America in her glory," the social protests to make America a better place, and portraits of the famous and unknown, young, old, Spanish, Indian, black and white. (617) 266-4351.

### SAN FRANCISCO, CA

#### September 25

Tjanting: The Reading. A participatory reading of the 200 page prose poem by Ron Silliman at the Church Street Muni Metro Station, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Public language returned to the point of origin. A bus ride is better than most art. A part of Urban Site. Free.

#### September 28

City Shadows: The Urban Crisis and the Politics of Everyday Life. A talk by Manuel Castells, author of *The Urban Question*, his first since returning from a year in Spain. 8 p.m. at 80 Langton Street (near 7th & Folsom). A part of Urban Site. Free.

### OAKLAND, CA

#### September 30-October 2

Labor Notes West Coast Conference: "Saving Our Jobs and Working Conditions." Panels and workshops on fighting concessions; protectionism and local content; plant closings; the new West Coast economy; and more. Simultaneous Spanish translation, childcare provided. Pre-registration (\$35) required. For information, contact Labor Notes, 6417 Hillegas Avenue, Oakland, CA 94618; (415) 658-1147.

### NEW YORK, NY

#### October 1

Join Bella Abzug, Abbie Hoffman, and others

### CHICAGO, IL

#### October 6

Nicaraguan Ambassador Antonio Jarquin will speak at the Cathedral of St. James, 65 E. Huron at 7:30. Donation, \$2. Sponsored by Women for Peace and Help End the Arms Race.

#### October 6

Physicians for Social Responsibility Chicago Chapter meeting. Rush Medical Center, 1750 W. Harrison, Room 1245-Jelke. Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Speaker: Psychologist Dr. Michael Stephen. "Disarmament and Peace: You Make the Difference." C.M.E. credit-Category II. Everyone welcome.

### STANFORD, CA

#### October 7 & 8

Stanford University School of Medicine and the Stanford/MidPeninsula chapter of Physicians for Social Responsibility are holding a symposium: "Prescription for Prevention: Nuclear War—Our Greatest Health Hazard." The symposium brings together key experts such as Wm. Colby (former CIA Director); retired Admiral Noel Gaylor; Erick Erickson; Dr. Helen Caldicott; writer, editor Robert Manoff; Sidney Drell, Deputy Director, Stanford Linear Accelerator; Kenneth Melmon, Chair, Dept. of Medicine, Stanford School of Medicine to examine the present danger and problems surrounding nuclear war and to prescribe innovative proposals to ending the arms race through psychological, political and diplomatic avenues of conflict resolution. The symposium will be held at Memorial Auditorium, Stanford University. 9 units CME's for health professionals. \$75 public, \$40 students. (415) 497-9060, or write PSR, P.O. Box 2337, Stanford, CA 94305.

### WASHINGTON, DC

#### October 7-9

Workers Education Local 189 presents "Labor and the Peace Movement," a conference at the NEA Building, Crabtree Auditorium, 1201 Sixteenth St., NW. Friday evening, 7:30 p.m. to Sunday noon. Issues include: labor's stake in ending the arms race, organizing for peace in a global perspective, conversion and reindustrialization, educating and organizing union members for peace. For more info, call (202) 529-1125.

### INDIANA, PA

#### October 26-28

"Technology and Society, Human Values and Policy Making" Conference. Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Economic, political and social aspects of our changing technological society. For information, contact IUP Center for Community Affairs, 359 Sutton Hall, Indiana, PA 15705, (412) 357-2443.

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# Greece

Continued from page 24  
the cultural sphere.

"Workers, technicians and artists sit together on committees that have been set up in various cultural institutions, such as the National Theatre. This is a completely new development since an elite previously ran our cultural activities. When the decentralization law is passed, we will transfer most of the ministry's budget to the mayors. They know very well the problems of their own towns. They will have control, and so the bureaucracy will be chopped."

Mercouri wants to democratize cultural life and make it more accessible to a people who have been so poorly served in the past. Discussions are under way between her ministry and the mayors to decide where to establish five regional theater centers that will also house small dramatic schools. Three "open universities" have also been launched to provide lectures for adults in addition to bringing culture to prisons, hospitals and remote villages.

Prior to the socialist victory in 1981, various left-wing mayors had already started local cultural centers. Under Mercouri's direction, the system has expanded to include 45 centers throughout Greece. "We will give an incentive to people who have crowded into the major cities like Athens—where life is unbearable—to return to their regions."

The cultural renaissance that Mercouri's ministry wishes to foster is certainly a far-reaching and imaginative one. It includes the creation of a national system of public libraries as well as supporting a translation program for Greek writers. "Except for Nobel Prize winners, like Odysseus Elytis, most of them have not been translated into major languages. We also want to sponsor better translations of the ancient tragedies. Forgive me for telling you this, but many that exist in English are often very bad."

Given her own cinematic background, the upgrading and promotion of the Greek cinema industry remains a high priority. Whereas the junta spent only 50 million drachmas on Greek films, Mercouri's current budget of 400 million drachmas will soon be doubled. A new law will also provide incentives to theater owners and distributors who help to promote Greek productions.

Greek cultural policy now has an important international dimension. "For the first time, we have extremely good cultural exchanges with foreign countries. And this applies to contemporary as much as ancient art."

In collaboration with her close friend, France's Culture Minister Jack Lang, Mercouri recently held a conference on the island of Hydra—"The Mediterranean Through the Ages and Today"—for the cultural ministers of 18 Mediterranean countries.

"Later this year I hope we will have two other cultural meetings in Delphi. Again, we will invite the Mediterranean ministers and afterwards we will host a meeting of EEC ministers." Breaking in-

to laughter, she announced: "Since we have not informed those governments yet, this information is being revealed to you publicly for the first time!"

The threat of undue American influence over great areas of Western economic and cultural life is frequently referred to in PASOK's political program. Whether confronting the issue of American bases in the eastern Mediterranean or the power of American multinationals that package and sell mass cultural products, Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu's government gives the impression of trying to harness Greek resources to resist American encroachment.

In a speech that she delivered to London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, Mercouri spoke of the Americanization of Greek culture and lifestyles: "When our blue-jeaned youth dance to rock'n'roll, when they park their Harley Davidson motorcycles before the theater playing *Tootsie*, and the refresh themselves with a Pepsi-Cola while waiting for their friends to finish eating their Big Macs, I must wonder what links our youth retain with Greek identity. How to compete with these production Goliaths when our resources are so limited?"

Despite this sense of retaining the integrity of Greek arts, Mercouri rejects the construction of a protective wall around Greece's cultural life. "I don't want to become chauvinistic like the junta's colonels who always praised everything that was Greek. What they were trying to do was unbearable. They were creating a masterpiece of bad taste."

"As long as I remain Minister of Culture, I will never close the doors to other

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cultural influences. I will be very happy to see our National Theater performing Shakespeare or Pinter. But we will also be obliged to produce Greek plays—if they are good—since the Greek people are paying for it all."

## Art of reconciliation?

Few European countries continue to suffer as Greece does from the bitter divisions created by repression and deep political divisions. Can a cultural program aid in the task of national reconciliation?

"Our most important act was the abolishment of censorship and the promotion of all our artists. I don't believe that art should be used to punish somebody because they don't share your ideology. In my own ministry, the staff are not only drawn from PASOK, the governing party. Our great poet Elytis is associated with the New Democratic Party, but we will promote him along with good artists from the Communist Party. We must not create barriers."

"But we don't have any great problems in this respect," she said, laughing, "because most of our artists are left-wing and they are usually the most talented."

Nevertheless, Greek art and politics have always been tightly interwoven. Of the 13 female Members of Parliament, five are actresses. "In Greece, everybody talks about politics and feels engaged. Each one feels he can resolve the problems which the Prime Minister can't resolve. Everybody wants to be a minister."

Barry Cohen is foreign editor of the *New Statesman* in London.

## CLASSIFIED

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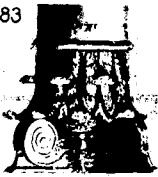
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An interview with Greece's Minister of Culture and Sciences, Melina Mercouri.

Judah Passow Network



# Mercouri Rising

By BARRY COHEN

IN DISCUSSING HER POLITICAL CAREER, MELINA MERCOURI ONCE REMARKED: "I ATE POLITICS WITH MY mother's milk." As the granddaughter of a former mayor of Athens and the daughter of a prominent left-wing member of the Greek Parliament, politics has run a parallel course with her career as an

actress and film star. When the colonels grabbed power in Greece in 1967, Mercouri was visiting the U.S., enjoying the phenomenal popularity that she had acquired from her role in the film NEVER ON SUNDAY. Her subsequent criticism of the right-wing junta led to the loss of her Greek citizenship, confiscation of her property and death threats. During seven years of exile, Mercouri became one of the most prominent opponents of the military regime. When it collapsed in 1974, she and her husband, film director Jules Dassin, immediately returned to Greece. She then became a founding member

of PASOK, Greece's ruling socialist party. In 1977, Mercouri was elected to

Parliament from a poor working-class district of Piraeus. After the Socialists' victory in the 1981 elections, she was appointed Minister of Culture and Sciences. While visiting London to promote her well-publicized campaign for the return of the Elgin marbles from the British Museum to Greece, Mercouri gave *THESE TIMES* an exclusive interview about her political work.

With its all plan to radically transform Greek society, PASOK has given the Ministry of Culture an unusually important role to play. "My ministry was originally created in 1971 under the junta," Mercouri pointed out in her forthright, passionate style. "But it was always governed by severe censorship that had existed from before the Second World War. It was a constant thorn in a spine." As befits a nation that is deeply conscious of its ancient past, her ministry is divided between a Directorate of Archeology and the Ministry of the Heritage and a Directorate of Cultural Affairs. "If you dig, you find something. Archaeology plays an immense part in your cultural life. But it presents serious problems. Everywhere you dig, something valuable turns up. This creates a social problem because we don't have the money to compensate the poor people who have a small home or farm on the site. Decentralization is a persistent theme in the government's strategy for restructuring Greek society. Although legislation implementing this reform has yet been approved by Parliament, practical steps toward decentralization have already been taken to "socialize" and "democratize" the

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